

**We are Crew, not Passengers!**

# **Christa McAuliffe Charter School**



## **FAMILY HANDBOOK**

**2024-25**

**508-879-9000**

**[www.mcauliffecharter.org](http://www.mcauliffecharter.org)**

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# McAuliffe

Christa McAuliffe Charter School

Dear McAuliffe Families,

It is my pleasure and honor to join the Christa McAuliffe Charter School community this year! I am very excited about the 2024-2025 school year and to have our scholars join us and light up the building.

Contained within this 2024-2025 McAuliffe Charter Family Handbook is a compilation of our basic policies and practices into this one document. You will see that the Handbook aligns us with the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts while also expressing our specific principles and vision as an educational community. We hope that you will find this documentation useful, and we also hope that you will reach out to us if you have any questions.

Our commitment to the growth and experience of our McAuliffe scholars is as strong as ever. We draw strength from our families, our teachers, and our community. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you have any questions or require any assistance. I am deeply grateful to be at McAuliffe and I look forward to working with you!

Sincerely,

Noel Green

Executive Director

[ngreen@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:ngreen@mcauliffecharter.org)

# Annual and Continuous Notice Concerning Nondiscrimination

[Statement](#)

[List of Written Materials that Contain the Notice](#)

## Nondiscrimination Statement

The Christa McAuliffe Charter School (McAuliffe) may not and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, homelessness, or English language proficiency (M.G.L. c. 71, § 89(m); 603 CMR 1.06(l)). For questions about compliance or to communicate a grievance, please contact the individuals listed below who together serve to coordinate compliance under Title IX and Section 504.

John Ermilio  
Director of Business & HR  
508-879-9000x616  
[jermilio@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:jermilio@mcauliffecharter.org)

Tony Fratantonio  
Director of Culture  
508-879-9000x133  
[afratantonio@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:afratantonio@mcauliffecharter.org)

Michelle Arons  
Director of Student Services  
508-879-9000x431  
[marons@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:marons@mcauliffecharter.org)

Noel Green  
Executive Director  
508-879-9000x613  
[ngreen@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:ngreen@mcauliffecharter.org)

## List of Written Materials that Contain the Notice

Enrollment Policy  
Family Handbook  
Job Postings  
Faculty Handbook

## Home-School Communication

[Signing up to Receive McAuliffe Communications](#)

[Communication Guidelines](#)

[Friday Newsletters](#)

[McAuliffe Resources for Parents/Guardians: www.mcauliffecharter.org/resources](http://www.mcauliffecharter.org/resources)

[Community Alert System](#)

## Signing up to Receive McAuliffe Communications (Newsletters & Text Alerts)

### Newsletters

In order to receive McAuliffe newsletters and announcements, every family must opt-in. Visit <https://tinyurl.com/mcauliffemail> to sign up. This is to ensure that McAuliffe communications are sent directly to your inbox. Families who have received school communications previously must also sign up using the link.

If you opt-in to receive the newsletters and encounter problems with email delivery, please contact Gary Alpert at [galpert@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:galpert@mcauliffecharter.org)

### Text Alerts

In order to receive McAuliffe text message alerts, each family member who wishes to receive text alerts will need to opt-in directly from their cell phone. Send a text to 67857 with the word “Yes” in the body of the text.



### Communication Guidelines

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The success of scholars depends on many factors; one of them is effective communication between families and teachers. Essentially, good communication includes knowing teachers, being a partner in your child’s learning, and respecting the lines of communication throughout the year.

In general, we ask that you go straight to the person you need to talk to: if your concern relates to classroom instruction, call/email your child’s teacher. If you want to ask about your child’s peer relationships, call/email his or her crew leader or the guidance counselor. Please see the chart below that indicates “Who to contact for what”.

Here are our guidelines for communication:

- **Keep your emails brief and to the point.** If you find yourself revising a message or typing a novel, consider deleting that message and sending a message requesting a time to touch base by phone. The problem is likely more complex than can be ironed out by email and the last thing you want is a novel of an email sent back to you!
- **Please allow for a 2 business day response window.** Faculty receive many email messages during a school day while they are teaching, planning expeditions, and grading. They may not be able to respond immediately to your message. If you have not heard back after 2 business days, please send a quick email reminder. If there is further lack of response, please email our Instructional Coaches who will be sure to follow up.
- **Please do not drop in on teachers or leaders; Schedule time to talk or meet.** If you are at school or in the community, you may run into teachers or other faculty and be tempted to ask about the progress of your child. Please avoid doing this so teachers have an opportunity to prepare for discussions about your child.

### Friday Newsletters

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The school sends out a weekly newsletter to all families at the end of most weeks, typically Fridays. In the newsletter, the school communicates about upcoming events, fieldwork, scholar & parent service opportunities, local activities, and high school information. There are regularly linked flyers with more specific information or forms that need to be filled out and returned to the school.

- **Hard Copies:** Parents and guardians may request a printed copy of the newsletter with all attachments and have their child pick it up from the main office on Friday afternoons.
- **Forms:** Forms that need to be filled out should be sealed in an envelope and labeled clearly with the first and last name of the person who the forms should go to and the topic (e.g. “October Lunch - Abby Lyons”). Scholars should turn forms into the main office unless otherwise specified.

McAuliffe Resources for Parents/Guardians: [www.mcauliffecharter.org/resources](http://www.mcauliffecharter.org/resources)

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McAuliffe Resources -- [mcauliffecharter.org/resources](https://mcauliffecharter.org/resources) -- is the hub for family and scholar resources. Teachers update homework online and families can access the online gradebook via the PowerSchool Parent Portal. Families and scholars can access numerous resources including but not limited to newsletters and school forms. Scholars can log into their own McAuliffe accounts to access their Google accounts which include: email, Google Drive, and calendaring functions. We highly encourage you to bookmark [McAuliffe Resources](https://mcauliffecharter.org/resources) so that you can access it easily and regularly!

### Community Alert System

When McAuliffe needs to communicate with families due to weather (e.g. delayed opening, school closure or early dismissal), the school contacts families with our community alert system. Each family in our database receives an automated phone call, text message alert (if opted-in), and an email. The school also posts on the school’s Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram pages.

## Who to Contact for What

### Communication Guidelines

The success of scholars depends on many factors; one of them is effective communication between families and teachers. Essentially, good communication includes knowing teachers, being a partner in your child’s learning, and respecting the lines of communication through the year.

In general, we ask that you go straight to the person you need to talk to: if your concern relates to classroom instruction, call/email your child’s teacher. If you want to ask about your child’s peer relationships, call/email his or her crew leader or the school counselor. The chart below indicates “Who to contact for what”.

#### Reporting Absences + Tardies

It is critical that you communicate any time that your child will be absent from school, arrive late to school or get dismissed early so that we know your child’s whereabouts.

**Absence Line** \*You may call, text or email\*

[attendance@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:attendance@mcauliffecharter.org), 508-250-0327

\*Please leave your child’s full name, a phone number, and their Crew Leader

#### Your Child’s Learning

Visit [mcauliffecharter.org/contact/](https://mcauliffecharter.org/contact/) to find contact information for teachers, crew leaders, and case managers.

#### General Information

**Sarabeth Guptil**, Receptionist

[sguptill@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:sguptill@mcauliffecharter.org), 508.879.9000 x100

**Jean Corrielis**, School Counselor for grade 6 DOY05192011

[jcorrielis@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:jcorrielis@mcauliffecharter.org) 508.879.9000 x163

**Marcie Rozek-Arena**, School Counselor for grade 7

[mareana@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:mareana@mcauliffecharter.org) 508.879.9000 x120

**Megan Hines** School Counselor for grade 8

[mhines@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:mhines@mcauliffecharter.org) 508.879.9000 x164

**Liliana Rodriguez**, Adjustment Counselor for all grades

[lrodriguez@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:lrodriguez@mcauliffecharter.org) 508-879-9000 x263

#### School Counseling

Mental health, bullying, attendance/truancy, 504 plans, high school transition counseling

#### Student Discipline

**Karim Dao** Dean of Students

[kdao@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:kdao@mcauliffecharter.org) 508.879.9000 x131

**Tony Fratantonio**, Director of Culture

[afratantonio@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:afratantonio@mcauliffecharter.org), 508.879.9000 x133

**Family Engagement**

Portuguese & Spanish Communication,  
Admissions, Parent Teacher Group

[@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:@mcauliffecharter.org) 508-879-9000 x604  
[admissions@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:admissions@mcauliffecharter.org)

**Health Office**

Medicine, Allergies, Accessibility

**Frankie Trombino**

[nurse@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:nurse@mcauliffecharter.org) , 508.879.9000 x156

**Michelle Arons**, Director of Student Services

[marons@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:marons@mcauliffecharter.org), 508.879.9000 x431

**Special Education, 504 Plans &**

**Special Education Parent Advisory Council**

Visit [mcauliffecharter.org/contact/](http://mcauliffecharter.org/contact/) to find contact information for your child's IEP case manager.

**English Language Learning**

**Christina Rish**, ELL Coordinator

[crish@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:crish@mcauliffecharter.org) 508.879.9000 x531

**Academic Program**

Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment

**Nellie Zupancic**, Director of Teaching and Learning

[nupancic@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:nupancic@mcauliffecharter.org) 508.879.9000 x432

- Teachers and crew leaders are the first professionals to communicate with when you have questions about your child's learning or concerns about a particular class, assignment, or situation.

**Jamie Sharrow**, Math/Science Instructional Coach

[jsharrow@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:jsharrow@mcauliffecharter.org) 508.879.9000 x132

**Liz Goodenough**, ELA/Social Studies Instructional Coach

[lgoodenough@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:lgoodenough@mcauliffecharter.org) 508.879.9000 x956

- If you are struggling to communicate with a teacher or have concerns about the educator, please contact his/her supervisor named to the right.

**Dan Snyder**, World Languages Instructional Coach

[dsnyder@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:dsnyder@mcauliffecharter.org) 508.879.9000 x200

**Christina Morello**, Coordinator of Crew and Learning Operations

[cmorello@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:cmorello@mcauliffecharter.org), 508.879.9000 x 132

**Enrichment**

**Be Perron**, Enrichment Coordinator

[enrichment@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:enrichment@mcauliffecharter.org), 508.561.0882

**Athletics**

**Jamie Sharrow and Carly Reardon**, Athletics Coordinator

[jsharrow@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:jsharrow@mcauliffecharter.org) and [creardon@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:creardon@mcauliffecharter.org)

**Data, Accounts**

Email, Address & Phone # Changes

**Sarabeth Guptill**, Receptionist

[sguptill@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:sguptill@mcauliffecharter.org), 508.879.9000 x100

**Business, Breakfast/Lunch, Transportation, etc**

Transportation, Facility, Fees

**Abby Lyons**, Office Manager

[alyons@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:alyons@mcauliffecharter.org), 508.879.9000 x6000

**John Ermilio** Director of Business & Human Resources

**Communications & Outreach**

Newsletter, Social Media, Website,  
Community Outreach, Fundraising

**Gary Alpert**, Director Admissions and Community Outreach

[galpert@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:galpert@mcauliffecharter.org) 508-879-9000 x615

**Other**

Not sure who to contact? Send a quick message to Abby and one of us will follow up with you!

**Abby Lyons**, Office Manager

[alyons@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:alyons@mcauliffecharter.org), 508.879.9000 x600

**Noel Green**, Executive Director

[ngreen@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:ngreen@mcauliffecharter.org), 508-879-9000 x613

**Board of Trustees**

**Rick Felty**, Board Chair

[boardchair@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:boardchair@mcauliffecharter.org)

# Translation Processes and Procedures

[Identification of Parents/Guardians with Limited English Skills](#)

[Translation Processes and Procedures](#)

[Bilingual Outreach Coordinator](#)

[Written/Print Translation - Spanish or Portuguese](#)

[Interpretation - Spanish and Portuguese](#)

[Translation and Interpretation for Low Incidence Languages](#)

[Online Materials: Newsletters and Website](#)

[Recruitment/Admissions/Enrollment Materials](#)

## Identification of Parents/Guardians with Limited English Skills

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Upon a family's enrollment of a student in the school, the family completes a Home Language Survey (modeled after a sample provided by the MA DESE). The school uses this information in order to determine which families speak another language at home. The school's English Language Learner (ELL) Coordinator reviews the Home Language Surveys and identifies families to communicate with in order to: a) determine if the scholar has limited English skills, b) determine if the parents/guardians have limited English skills. The school uses this system to identify which parents/guardians have limited English skills and so may need translation or interpretation.

## Translation Processes and Procedures

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### Bilingual Liaison

The school's Family Engagement Coordinator is responsible for building relationships with families who primarily speak, read, and/or write in Portuguese or Spanish.

### Written/Print Translation - Spanish or Portuguese

Annually, important information and documents, (including the family handbook, code of character, and special education documents) are translated into Portuguese and Spanish and are distributed to parents or guardians with limited English skills.

The following documents are translated annually into both Portuguese and Spanish: family handbook (which includes school calendar, daily schedule, attendance policy, dress code, code of character, discipline policy, bullying policy, grading and reporting methods, and communication information), disciplinary letters, attendance letters, report cards, special education meeting invitations and evaluation consents, Individualized Education Programs, 504 plans, and ELL documentation.

The school has a list of the names of families who receive translated materials and coordinate the translating. The school also has a list of the communication and documents that need to be translated and disseminated to families. Faculty and leaders do their best to have materials translated so that families get information in a timely fashion. When necessary, documents may be Google translated.

### Interpretation - Portuguese and Spanish

When a member of faculty sets up a conference with parents or guardians with limited English skills, faculty submit a request to the school's Family Engagement Coordinator who speaks Portuguese and Spanish. The Family Engagement Coordinator then works with the faculty member and the family as a translator.

### **Translation and Interpretation for Low Incidence Languages**

For low incidence languages, the school contracts with UMASS Translation Center to provide translation services for both oral and written language.

### **Online Materials: Newsletters, Notices, and Website**

The school's web browser allows for visitors to translate the site into the selected language. All of the school's weekly newsletters and notices are linked to the website which allows for the materials to be translated quickly for any language, whether Spanish, Portuguese or a low incidence language. Weekly newsletters are sent out in English, Portuguese, and Spanish.

### **Extracurricular Materials: Enrichment and Athletics**

The school hosts three afterschool enrichment sessions per year: fall, winter, and spring. The brochure and registration form for each enrichment session is translated into Portuguese, Spanish, and low incidence language as needed.

Students have the opportunity to participate on a number of competitive athletic teams: basketball, cross country, soccer, and track. Soccer and basketball involve tryouts whereas cross country and track are open to any interested student. Opportunities to try out for or to participate on a team are primarily advertised to students through daily announcements shared each morning. Opportunities are also communicated to families in the weekly newsletter.

### **Recruitment/Admissions/Enrollment Materials**

The school provides translated admissions materials including the admissions policy and procedure, enrollment forms, and the admissions brochure. Other materials are posted on the school's website which can be viewed in other languages as selected by the viewer. In addition, the school publicizes admissions events (e.g. Open Houses and Information Sessions) in English, Portuguese and Spanish.

## **Feedback Loops and Complaint Procedures**

[Open Dialogue](#)

[Surveys](#)

[Thought Box](#)

[Open Forum](#)

[Complaint and Resolution Procedures](#)

### **Open Dialogue**

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McAuliffe employees encourage open lines of communication and so encourage parents, guardians, and scholars to communicate directly with the relevant professional to communicate feedback, ask questions, or express frustrations or disappointment. The first person to communicate with should almost always be the person directly involved. If a problem persists or a resolution is not achieved, it may be helpful to ask for a school leader to be involved to help facilitate a problem-solving process. Please see the communication section of the handbook to determine the names and contact information for teachers, leaders, and other staff.

### **Surveys**

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The school conducts both mid-year surveys and a comprehensive end-of-the-year survey. Surveys are online and anonymous. School leaders and Board representatives review surveys, discuss patterns of strength and areas for improvement. As needed, school leaders establish response plans and share these with others involved (teachers, board members, Parent Teacher Group, etc). School leaders also publish the quantitative results for families to review and

discuss at an Open Forum. Surveys are always conducted to help inform progress toward goals and ongoing programmatic and operational improvements.

## Open Forum

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Open Forums are hosted a few times during the year by school leaders and are typically held prior to the monthly Parent Teacher Group meeting. The role of this forum is to offer parents and school leaders the opportunity to connect directly with each other, open the lines of communication, and share ideas, concerns, and solutions regarding the school. Open Forum helps school leaders stay in tune with families and scholars, get feedback from families, receive support from the parent community, and strengthen the school through collaboration and communication. There are times when a specific topic will be recommended for discussion by school leaders or parents, but typically, the Open Forum begins with a brief sharing of topics on the minds of those in attendance and an agenda is built from there.

## Complaint and Resolution Procedures

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The school and the Board work together to hear and resolve any complaints. If a problem arises, both the school and the Board encourage the complainant to address the problem directly with the staff member(s). If the complainant is dissatisfied with the resolution proposed by the appropriate faculty or staff member, a meeting should be scheduled with the Executive Director. If this does not resolve the issue, then the Board encourages the complainant to contact the Board Chair [boardchair@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:boardchair@mcauliffecharter.org). The Board Chair or designee will schedule a meeting with the complainant and at least one additional board member to learn about the issue and to take steps toward resolution.

If this meeting does not resolve the relevant complaint, the complainant should follow the guidelines set by M.G.L. c. 71, 89(II) and 603 CMR 1.10. If an individual believes that the school has violated any provision of the charter school law and regulations, he or she may file a formal complaint directly with the Board of Trustees ([board@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:board@mcauliffecharter.org)). After receiving the complaint, the Board must send a written response to the individual within 30 days. The Board of Trustees shall, pursuant to a complaint received under 603 CMR 1.10, or on its own initiative, conduct reviews to ensure compliance with M.G.L. c. 71, 89 and 603 CMR 1.00. The charter school and the specific individuals involved shall cooperate to the fullest extent with such review.

If the Board does not address the complaint to the individual's satisfaction, the individual may submit the complaint to the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, who shall investigate the complaint and make a written response, 603 CMR 1.10(4). In the event that the charter school is found in non-compliance with M.G.L. c. 71, s 89, or 603 CMR 1.00, as a result of a complaint or upon investigation, the Commissioner or the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education may take such action as it deems appropriate, including but not limited to suspension or revocation of the charter under 603 CMR 1.13, or referral of the matter to the District Attorney, the Office of the Attorney General, or any other agency for appropriate legal action.

If an individual believes that the school has violated any federal or state law or regulation, the school encourages the complainant to follow the same steps identified above. In addition, he/she has the right to file a complaint through the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Bureau of Special Education Appeals, Program of Quality Assurances, or the State Office of Civil Rights.

## Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees (the Board) is a governance body that oversees the school's faithfulness to charter, academic success, and organizational viability. The Board contributes to setting strategic priorities and monitors progress toward goals. The Executive Director reports to the Board of Trustees and engages in an annual evaluation.

The Board of Trustees typically meets in an open meeting once per month on a Tuesday evening from 6:30pm - 8:30pm. Board Committees (Audit, Development, Education, Executive, Finance, and Governance) meet at regular intervals with

varying frequency depending on the committee priorities. For example, Finance and Education Committees meet almost every month whereas the Governance Committee meets about every other month. Meetings are open to the general public; McAuliffe parents/guardians, as well as employees, are welcome to attend. All Board and committee meetings are publicized on the school's website and public calendar.

Serving on the McAuliffe board offers unique opportunities:

- to shape the future of McAuliffe and establish the school as a model charter & middle school in the state.
- to positively impact the recruitment and retention of excellent and diverse McAuliffe educators.
- to build partnerships with local universities, public school systems, and businesses.
- to expand and improve on the resources we provide our scholars and educators.

Who are we looking for?

- Dedicated individuals who are looking to make a meaningful impact in their community.
- Creative and diverse voices that can help shape the direction of the school.
- Individuals with connections to community businesses, not-for-profits and/or municipalities to help build stronger bridges into our region.
- People who are willing to share diverse perspectives and ask difficult questions.
- Multilingual individuals with strong ties to local Brazilian and Hispanic communities.

What is the commitment?

- Two hours per month to attend Board Meetings.
- Participation on a committee (current examples are Education, Finance, Development, Governance, and Audit).
- Attend school events, get to know the great work being done by our staff and students.

If you would like to contact the Board of Trustees, please email [boardchair@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:boardchair@mcauliffecharter.org) or [board@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:board@mcauliffecharter.org).

## School Leadership

### A Distributed School Leadership Model

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“Expeditionary Learning school leaders build a cohesive school vision focused on student achievement and continuous improvement, and they align all activities in the school to that vision. Leaders use data wisely, boldly shape school structures to best meet student needs, celebrate joy in learning, and build a school-wide culture of trust and collaboration. Leadership in EL schools goes beyond a single person or team-it is a role and expectation for all.” - EL Core Practices

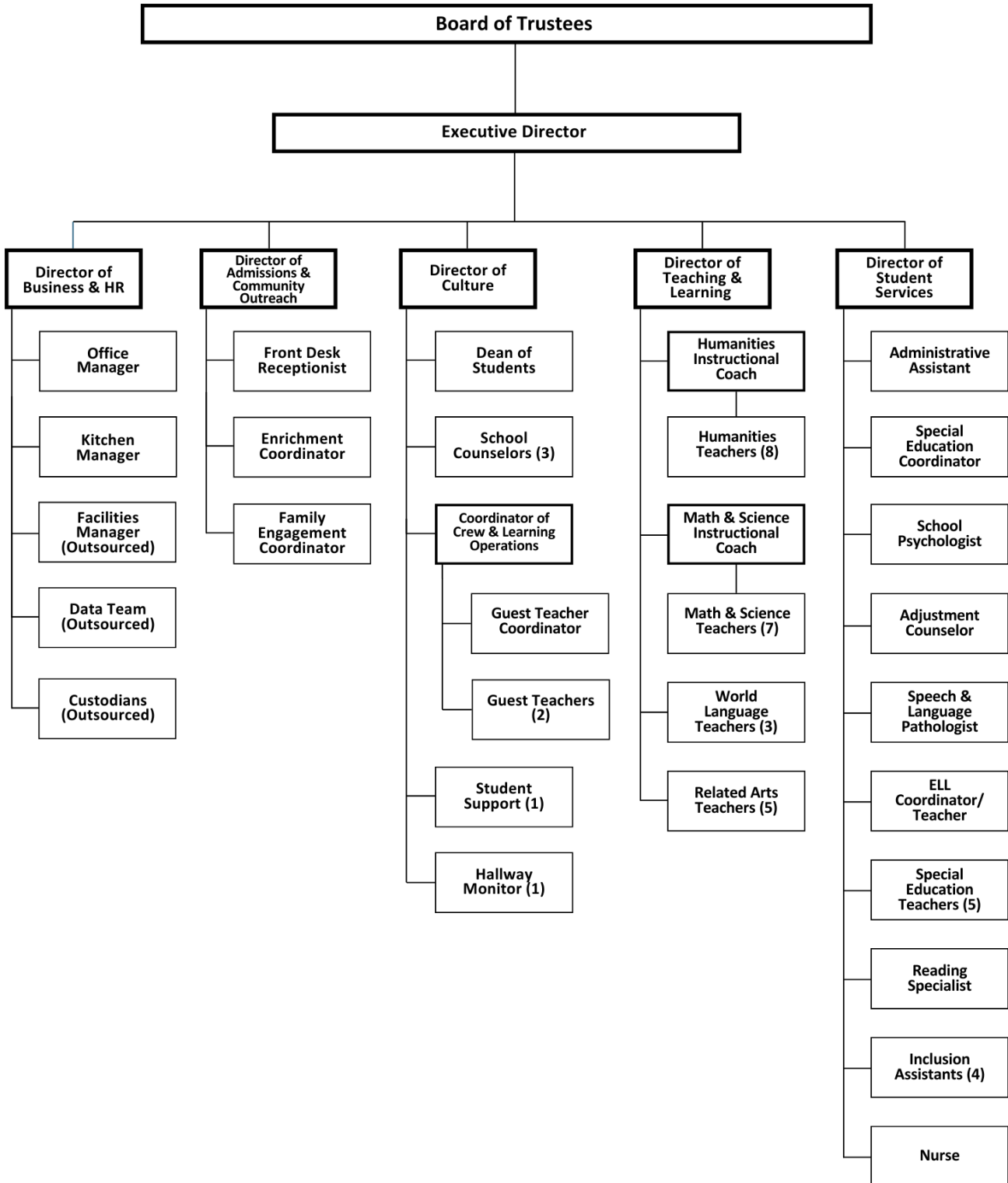
McAuliffe employs a distributed leadership structure that supports teacher growth, student learning, and implementation of Expeditionary Learning core practices. In this model, school leaders collaborate to identify direction, solve problems, and make decisions. School leaders annually review roles and responsibilities and make adjustments based on the school's needs and priorities. The organization chart below shows how staffing is organized in the school. The section following the organization chart gives a brief description of each school leadership position.

Organization Chart 2024-25



# CHRISTA MCAULIFFE CHARTER SCHOOL

## Organizational Chart



updated April 2024

## School Leaders

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### **Executive Director: Noel Green**

McAuliffe's Executive Director (ED) is the head of school and oversees the school's faithfulness to its mission, vision, and strategic goals. The ED is responsible for fostering a school vision and supporting that with a long term strategic plan created with input from the community and oversight from the Board of Trustees. The ED works closely with the Instructional Leadership Team (led by the Director of Teaching and Learning) to align annual goals with the long term strategy and vision, to set priorities and clear focus, to use data (achievement data, surveys, focus groups, etc.) to inform decision-making. The ED focuses externally on engaging with prospective families and community partners, to raise funds to support programming and capital projects, and to engage in collaborative relationships with other school leaders and supporters. The ED supervises the school's directors. He is evaluated annually by the Board of Trustees Executive Committee.

### **Director of Teaching & Learning: Nellie Zupancic**

The Director of Teaching and Learning works closely with other members of the Instructional Leadership Team to set and implement the vision for curriculum, instruction, and professional learning in the service of academic achievement for all students. The Director of Teaching and Learning leads the school's growth in its implementation of EL Education Core Practices. She works closely with the Executive Director to implement the school's strategic plan while collaborating with EL school designers to set the direction for professional growth. McAuliffe's Director of Teaching and Learning supervises the Instructional Coaches and related arts teachers.

### **Director of Student Services: Michelle Arons**

The Director of Student Services oversees the Special Education, 504, and English Language Learners programming, ensuring that the school is providing all students access to all components of the program and ensuring regulatory and legal compliance with all relevant state and federal laws and regulations. The Director of Student Services supervises the special education instructional coach, the special education coordinator, the ELL coordinator, and the school nurse, as well as the school's adjustment counselor, psychologist, and speech-language pathologist. She also oversees the school's Title I programming including Homework Club and the school's extended school year program.

### **Director of Business & HR John Ermilio**

The Director of Business & HR is responsible for directing and overseeing McAuliffe's business and financial functions, food service, transportation, and purchasing and procurement programs. The Director of Business & HR directs the fiscal policies and procedures defined and overseen by the school's Board of Trustees Finance Committee. The Director of Business & HR works closely with the Executive Director and contracted CPA to review spending through the year and monthly budget reports and forecasted spending. In addition, the Director of Business & HR oversees the facility and site maintenance, custodial staff, and improvement projects. The Director of Business & HR supervises the Office Manager, technology specialist, lunch staff, and oversees the consultative work completed by data specialists and custodial staff. The Director of Business & HR oversees hiring and supports faculty and staff to navigate employment matters.

### **Director of Admissions and Community Outreach: Gary Alpert**

The Director of Admissions and Community Outreach leads the school's admissions, marketing, and development of community partnerships. This position is also responsible for the school's communications including translation of materials to ensure all families are receiving important information about the school in their preferred language. The Director of Community Development prepares the weekly newsletter, maintains the website, and administers the school's social media activity. He serves as the liaison to the school's Parent-Teacher-Group and sits on the Board of Trustees Governance and Development Committees.

### **Director of Culture: Tony Fratantonio**

McAuliffe's Director of Culture works with students, teachers, parents, and school leaders to build a school culture infused with teamwork, kindness, and determination. The Director of Culture supervises the School's Dean of Students, the Coordinator of Crew and Learning Operations, and the counseling team. He also collaborates with instructional

coaches to support the development of professionals' competence and confidence in their work with adolescent scholars.

### **Dean of Students: Karim Dao**

Similar to the Director of Culture, McAuliffe's Dean of Students works with students, teachers, parents, and school leaders to build a school culture infused with teamwork, kindness, and determination. Specifically, the Dean of Students sets high expectations for student behavior and is responsible for garnering faculty and student buy-in to collectively uphold these expectations. The Dean of Students facilitates the implementation of the school's Code of Conduct including investigating disciplinary situations, communicating with teachers and families, and supporting students to engage in consequences and restorative processes, always with a focus on "making things right."

### **Instructional , Liz Goodenough (humanities), Jamie Sharrow (math/science), Christina Morello (Crew) Dan Snyder (World Language Team Lead)**

McAuliffe's Instructional Coaches report to McAuliffe's Director of Teaching and Learning and are critical members of the Instructional Leadership Team. The Instructional Coaches specialize in the following content areas: Humanities, Math/Science, and World Language. Coaches engage teachers in ongoing professional growth focused on curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Coaches directly supervise a caseload of teachers and implement the annual evaluation cycle that includes self-assessment, goal-setting, gathering a body of evidence, and the use of a comprehensive rubric to guide mid-year and end of year evaluations.

## **Parent Teacher Group and Crew Parents**

[Overview](#)

[PTG's priorities for 2024-25](#)

[Membership](#)

[Meetings](#)

[Officers and Executive Board](#)

[Officer Elections](#)

[Coordinator Positions & Volunteer Opportunities](#)

[Crew Parents](#)

[Crew Gatherings and Community](#)

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### **Overview**

The McAuliffe Parent Teacher Group exists with a primary purpose to provide parents/guardians with specific ways to support the mission of the Christa McAuliffe Charter School and all scholars' learning and character development.

PTG leaders have identified priorities that offer a range of ways for parents/guardians to be involved with lighter or heavier touches, as we recognize that families have different schedules, responsibilities, and flexibility. Our hope is that each family is able to participate in at least one PTG activity/initiative/event whether behind-the-scenes or up-front-and-personal! Thank you for being a part of the McAuliffe community and contributing to our common mission and values!

If you have questions about the PTG or aren't sure how you can contribute, please contact one of the following individuals:

Betsy  
PTG President

[mcauliffeptgcrew@gmail.com](mailto:mcauliffeptgcrew@gmail.com)

Gary Alpert  
Director Admissions & Community

Outreach  
[galpert@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:galpert@mcauliffecharter.org)

### PTG's priorities for 2024-25

- **Community Building:** During the 2024-25 school year, the PTG's top priority is to help build the school community, both for scholars and families. We recognize that a sense of belonging can be difficult to develop and maintain with virtual interactions. We plan to implement community building through new "Community Hour" virtual meetings and increased support of Crews.
- **Crew Gatherings:** More active support of Crew Gatherings to help strengthen our community and improve scholar bonding through crew events held outside of the classroom. More involvement from previous years and a goal to have each crew gather twice.
- **Staff Appreciation:** Shower McAuliffe professionals with gratitude through simple fun tokens of appreciation throughout the year.
- **School Socials:** Host two social opportunities for scholars and recruit parents/guardians to plan and chaperone.
- **Ski Club:** Continue to support the operations of Ski Club.
- **Alumni College Scholarship:** Continue to provide an opportunity for McAuliffe graduates to apply for a college scholarship; engage a panel of parents/guardians and teachers in the application review and selection process.

### Membership

Parents/guardians, teachers and others in the McAuliffe community interested in supporting the mission of the McAuliffe PTG are eligible for membership. All members have the privilege of making motions, voting, and holding office. There are no dues.

It is necessary to have a quorum to take a vote. A quorum is defined as one more than twice the number of executive board members (e.g. with 1 president, 1 vice president, 1 secretary, and 1 treasurer, a quorum would be 9). This quorum of 9 would include the 4 executive board members and 5 additional PTG members.

### Meetings

The PTG will hold bi-monthly business meetings during the school year to discuss issues that are pertinent to our community. These meetings will take place bi-monthly on the third Monday of the month beginning in September. We hope that you will come and meet other parents/guardians and learn about our school at these meetings.

Meeting agendas and minutes are located on our website at [mcauliffecharter.org/ptg](http://mcauliffecharter.org/ptg).

### Officers and Executive Board

- President (or Co-Presidents)
- Vice President (or Co-Vice Presidents)
- Secretary (or Co-Secretaries)
- Treasurer (or Co-Treasurers)

### Officer Elections

PTG begins seeking nominations for officers at the start of the new calendar year. Elections take place at the May PTG Meeting.

### Coordinator Positions & Volunteer Opportunities

There are also numerous volunteer opportunities that range in scope and type:

- Alumni Scholarship Coordinator(s) & Volunteers
- Staff Appreciation Coordinator(s) & Volunteers
- Spirit Wear Coordinator
- Parent Liaison(s) to the Board of Trustees
- School Social Coordinators & Volunteers
- Ski Club Coordinator(s) and Volunteers

## Crew Parents

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### Crew Gatherings and Community

At McAuliffe, Crew is all about community building and social skill development. Scholars come together in Crew at least once per day to do check-ins while sitting in a circle. They take turns sharing their opinions and opening up about what is going well and what is challenging for them in and out of school.

**Crew Leaders** are responsible for facilitating the group during school and guiding Crews to work through whatever difficult situations emerge. So, when challenging interactions come up, time is taken to work through these challenges. Crew Leaders also set group norms (ground-rules), play ice-breaker games, and lead team-building activities that help the Crew to get to know one another and work together to accomplish goals.

Crews that share a classroom are called Sister Crews and Sister Crew Leaders will often pair up and work through team-building activities to strengthen relationships and the two groups' effectiveness. Sister Crews also sometimes do service projects together.

Like any group of humans -- teenagers or adults -- some Crews hit it off and get along really well almost immediately at the start of the school year while other Crews don't immediately connect and struggle to bond. Over the years, we've found that Crews and Sister Crews really benefit from getting together outside of the regular school day -- the regular Crew time -- to hang out or do something together that is JUST FUN -- no work, just fun!

Gatherings outside the classroom are organized by **Crew Parents** and happen a few times during the school year. Parents and scholars alike often find these informal, smaller events held outside of school time strengthen their bonds with McAuliffe. Scholars generally find their effectiveness within their Crew increases when they have a chance to interact in a more casual, non-school environment.

Our vision for the 2024-2025 school year is for each Crew to have at least two gatherings (Fall and Spring) organized by Crew Parents that average 1.5 to 2 hours in length. Some Crew gatherings could also be organized with Sister Crews.

Typically 1-2 Crew Parents per crew will organize all of the gatherings throughout the year. **Note:** It is **not** expected that Crew Leaders be able to participate in Crew Gatherings outside of the classroom. However, some Crew Leaders might be able to join in on the fun.

Once the Crew Parents have been identified, then the Crew will select what it wants to do. Typically that is done closer to the time identified for the gathering. Crew Parents will poll the Crew via email and get the aid of Crew Leaders to solicit ideas from the Scholars on what activities appeal to them.

Crew Parents can organize gatherings that range in nature from social to service to skill and knowledge building to adventures. Here are examples of past crew gatherings :

#### Social:

- dinner at a local restaurant
- ice cream at Ben & Jerry's
- a movie night in the crew room
- sledding and hot cocoa on a nearby hill

#### Service-Oriented:

- help local elders by raking leaves
- volunteer at a food pantry as a group or gather needed socks and gloves for homeless kids

#### Educational:

- gather to learn how to make soap or candles
- attend as a group a maker event at a local library
- visit the World War II Museum in Natick

#### Active adventures:

- Geo-caching
- hiking a local trail
- foraging for edibles

There are many, many free or low-cost ways to connect and reconnect during these non-school hosted gatherings.

## Special Education Parent Advisory Council

(Due to a waiver, this group is currently inactive.)

[Article I: Name of Organization](#)

[Article II: Purpose of the PAC](#)

[Article III: SEPAC Membership](#)

[What is SEPAC?](#)

[Article IV: Officers of the Special Education Parent Advisory Council](#)

[President](#)

[Vice-President](#)

[Secretary](#)

[Article V: Elections](#)

[Article VI: Meetings](#)

[Article VII: Subcommittees](#)

[Article VIII: Amendments](#)

### Article I: Name of Organization

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The name of this self-governed organization shall be the Christa McAuliffe Charter School Special Education Parents Advisory Council, also known as McAuliffe SEPAC.

### Article II: Purpose of the PAC

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The mission of the Christa McAuliffe Charter School SEPAC is to work for understanding of, respect for, and support of all children with special needs in the community. To that end, they will work to:

- promote a network of parents of children with special needs and provide the forum to share information.
- advise the Director of Student Services on operations and development of special education programs, parent & teacher training needs, and help to develop policy.
- promote communication between SEPAC members, local, State and National organizations, councils and groups. Promote communication and programs within the community to encourage understanding, acceptance and inclusion.
- provide informational forums to parents, educators, students and professionals.

### Article III: SEPAC Membership

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Membership shall be open to any person affiliated with the Christa McAuliffe Charter School who has attended at least one meeting of the SEPAC during the past 12 months. Membership is required to vote in annual officer elections and other business that comes before any SEPAC meeting. Meetings are defined as any SEPAC meeting, activities, workshops, or committees at which attendance is taken.

### Article IV: Officers of the Special Education Parent Advisory Council

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Officers of the McAuliffe SEPAC are elected by the membership and hold office for one year. If any office becomes vacant, an election for that office shall be held immediately, with term to expire at the September meeting. Multiple people can share an office as co-officers. Offices and officer responsibilities of the McAuliffe SEPAC are:

#### President

Set the agenda for each general meeting. Preside at all meetings of the McAuliffe SEPAC. Recommend the organization and monitor the function of subcommittees. Act as or assign liaison with the Director of Student Services.

### **Vice-President**

Preside at meetings in the absence of the President, or at the request of the President. Assist the President as appropriate and perform those responsibilities of the President at his/her request.

### **Secretary**

Coordinate all communication between the McAuliffe SEPAC and its membership. Coordinate the recording and filing of minutes of the McAuliffe SEPAC and its sub-committees. Collect and review all correspondence of the McAuliffe SEPAC. Prepare periodic reports for the Special Education Administration regarding PAC activities and needs.

### **Article V: Elections**

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Elections shall be the first order of business during the September meeting. Elections shall be decided by a simple majority vote of the attending membership. New officers shall take office immediately following their election. Nominations will be conducted at the meeting. All members are eligible to make nominations.

### **Article VI: Meetings**

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General Meetings shall be held as determined by the McAuliffe SEPAC, from September through June. Notice of all general meeting dates and elections shall be published in the Friday Newsletter in advance.

Matters which require a vote to be taken of the membership include, but are not limited to the following items:

- a change in the By-laws can be voted on at a general meeting or via emails to the president,
- a commitment of financial resources requires a simple majority of members,
- elections require a vote as described in Article V, Elections.

Minutes of all SEPAC meetings shall be recorded and retained for public record. Documents of interest to the members will be circulated via email or other means if a member does not have email.

### **Article VII: Subcommittees**

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Subcommittees shall be created as needed.

### **Article VIII: Amendments**

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These by-laws may be amended by a simple majority of the voting members at a general meeting.

## **Policy Concerning Visitors During the School Day**

The Board of Trustees encourages parents/guardians and guests to visit classrooms to observe and learn about the delivery of McAuliffe's educational program. Such visits can prove most beneficial in the promotion of a greater school and home cooperation and community understanding of how McAuliffe carries out its mission.

For security purposes, all visitors must report to the front office upon entering and leaving the building and sign a guest log showing arrival and departure times. Visitors must be escorted and accompanied by a member of the McAuliffe faculty or have a schedule of specific classes to visit. A visitor's pass must be worn by all visitors to the school building.

The following guidelines to classroom and school visits should be followed:

- Parental requests for classroom visitations will be welcomed as long as the educational process is not disrupted. To this end, such requests must be made, in writing, at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance to allow for proper arrangements to be made. [FORM](#)
- We welcome professionals in the field of education to visit our school and classrooms. Visits to the school must be planned in advance and approved by the Director of Teaching and Learning or the Executive Director. There must be a clear purpose for the visit. A McAuliffe host is responsible for planning a schedule of activities and going over visitor norms at the start of the visit.
- School administration has the authority to determine the number, times, and dates of observations by visitors. This will be done in consultation with staff members so as to give adequate notice to the staff members of the expected visits. School administration reserves the right to deny any visitation request.
- Classroom observations are strongly discouraged during the first three weeks of school, during standardized testing windows, and during the month of June.
- If a visitor is going to interact with the students and/or be responsible for assisting a teacher or staff member with students, any such visitor must have a valid and acceptable CORI background check on file with the Christa McAuliffe Charter School.

## Policy Concerning Non-Custodial Parents' Rights

Pursuant to G.L. c. 71, § 34H, a noncustodial parent may have access to the student record of his/her child in accordance with the following provisions.

- It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with any and all pertinent information regarding the status/rights of a non-custodial parent.
- A noncustodial parent is eligible to obtain access to the student record unless Christa McAuliffe Charter School (McAuliffe) has received documentation that:
  - The parent's access to the child is currently prohibited by a temporary or permanent protective order, except where the protective order, or any subsequent order which modifies the protective order, specifically allows access to the information described in this section; or
  - The parent is denied visitation or, based on a threat to the safety of the child, is currently denied legal custody of the child or is currently ordered to supervised visitation, and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation.
- The school shall place in the student's record documents indicating that a noncustodial parent's access to the student's record is limited or restricted. All such documentation shall be removed from the student's record immediately upon receipt of documentation evidencing expiration of any limitation or restriction.
- In order to obtain access, a non-custodial parent with restrictions must submit a written request for the student record to the Executive Director or designee.
  - Upon receipt of the request, the Executive Director or designee must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it

will provide the noncustodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the Executive Director with documentation that the noncustodial parent is not eligible to obtain access.

- The school must delete all electronic and postal address and telephone number information relating to either work or home locations of the custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parents. In addition, such records must be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.
- Upon receipt of a court order which prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to G.L. c. 71, §34H, Executive Director or designee shall notify the noncustodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the noncustodial parent.
- The Executive Director shall designate a staff member whose duties shall include the proper implementation of this policy.

## Attendance & Truancy Prevention Policies

[Participation Expectations](#)

[School Attendance & Massachusetts General Law](#)

[Absence/Tardy/Early Dismissal Procedures](#)

[Tardiness](#)

[Early Dismissal](#)

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[Events Outside of the Regular School Day](#)

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[Excused and Unexcused Absences](#)

[Making Up Schoolwork](#)

[Excessive Absences](#)

[Excerpts from Massachusetts General Law](#)

### Participation Expectations

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Students must be in school regularly in order to be active participants in learning activities and to maximize learning. The expectation is that students will arrive at school on time daily, leave school at dismissal time, and miss school only when the student is sick, has a family emergency, or has a religious occasion to observe. Class attendance is one of the requirements for academic promotion.

### School Attendance & Massachusetts General Law

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The school's attendance policy is aligned with the state law regarding student attendance:

School attendance is imperative to a student's academic success. Under current law, students under the age of 16 are required to attend school and parents who induce absences may be subject to criminal complaints. Students who are considered truant may be subject to court involvement through a CRA (Child Requiring Assistance). For more information regarding CRA procedures go to [CRA](#).

### Absence/Tardy/Early Dismissal Procedures

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Parents and guardians must communicate with the school when a child will be absent on any day. Parents should notify the school as soon as possible when a student is going to be absent, tardy, or dismissed early.

There are two options for reporting absences, tardiness, and early dismissals:

139 Newbury Street, Framingham, MA 01701 | 508.879.9000 | [mcauliffecharter.org](http://mcauliffecharter.org)

1. Call the McAuliffe Attendance line at 508-250-0327 and leave a voicemail with specific information about your child's absence.
2. Email the Attendance Line at [attendance@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:attendance@mcauliffecharter.org) and your child's crew leader.

If the school does not hear from a family and yet the child is not at school, the school will call the parent/guardian regarding the whereabouts of the child.

## **Tardiness**

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School begins at 8:00 a.m. The school building opens to students starting at 7:45am. Students must be in crew at 8:00 a.m. to be marked "present". Students who arrive at crew after 8:00 a.m. are marked "tardy" unless excused with a doctor's note or late bus. School Counselors will monitor tardiness, involve families and develop intervention plans. Persistent tardiness may be subject to involvement with the school attendance officer.

Students are expected to arrive to class on time. They are considered late to class when they come in after class has begun. Initially, a teacher will have a conversation with a student who arrives to class late. If the student repeatedly arrives late to class, reasonable consequences may be assigned. If the lateness to class continues after disciplinary action is taken, a teacher or counselor will work with the student, teachers, and family to develop an intervention plan. Further limitations on the student's privileges may be implemented.

## **Skipping Class**

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Students are expected to be present for the duration of each class block unless they have been excused for a specified reason. If a scholar leaves class or does not attend class without permission, then the student will be considered skipping class or leaving class without permission. Initially if a student leaves class without permission or skips a portion or entirety of a class, then a teacher will have a conversation with the student. If the behavior is repeated again, the teacher will then assign a consequence for the student. If the behavior still continues, then a teacher will fill out a Dean referral and the Dean of the Students will handle the matter. Reasonable consequences may be assigned and an intervention plan will be developed with students and family.

## **Early Dismissal**

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Students should not be dismissed early from school unless it is absolutely necessary. Families should schedule appointments after school hours. Students are dismissed at 2:30p.m. Monday to Friday.

If a student must be dismissed before the end of the day, families must plan this ahead of time so that the student may gather work from classes that will be missed. Families must also alert the main office ahead of time. Students must be signed out by a parent/guardian in person at the main office. No students should be dismissed between 2:00 and 2:30. Families need to dismiss students prior to 2:00 or await the regular dismissal times.

## **Late Pick-Ups**

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For students who do not take bus transportation or walk home, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to pick up students on time from school and after-school activities. If a student is waiting for a pick-up and a parent, legal guardian, or authorized adult cannot be reached by 5:00 p.m., the school will notify the Framingham Police Department. A meeting will be set up with a school leader as needed or if late pickups become chronic.

## **Events Outside of the Regular School Day**

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There are evening culminating events that all students are required to attend. We also ask all families to have at least one representative from the family attend the event to show support for the student. Students may be excused from these events for the same reasons that we excuse them from school: religious observance, family emergency, or illness.

The school aims to schedule mandatory and essential school events (including overnight fieldwork) on dates and at times that include families of all races, ethnicities, and religions. Families are encouraged to notify the school in advance of such events if they foresee a conflict with an event so that alternative arrangements can be made.

If a student has been absent during the school day he or she will not be allowed to participate in after-school activities that day, including school dances and sports events. However, in some cases, students may be allowed to participate in a culminating event. Exceptions must be made by a school leader.

### **Fitness Excuses**

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All students must participate in all classes unless they have a written note from a parent or guardian. If a student is unable to participate in any class (such as Wellness or Adventure) for more than three consecutive sessions, a note from a doctor is required. Notes should be submitted to the school nurse who will communicate with relevant faculty/staff.

### **Making Up Schoolwork**

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If a family knows that a student will miss school due to religious observance or other reasons, the family must communicate with the child's crew leader and the main office ahead of time. If the notification is within a reasonable amount of time, the student's teachers will prepare work for the student prior to the absence.

When a student is absent, he/she is responsible for making up missed work. We recommend that families that live near one another create a system of collecting work and dropping it off when a student is absent. Families may also access homework posted online. If the homework is not posted, the student or family may email the teacher directly.

### **Excused Absences, Unexcused Absences, and Chronic Absenteeism**

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#### **Excused and Unexcused Absences**

##### **Excused absences include:**

- Documented illness or injury
- Bereavement/family funeral
- Major religious observances
- Extraordinary family circumstances
- Experiencing Covid symptoms

##### **Unexcused absences include but are not limited to:**

- Repetitive or chronic absence or tardiness not documented by a doctor or other medical professional
- Truancy
- Family Vacation
- Undocumented absences
- Non-emergency family situations

The Director of Culture or designee will make the final determination of whether an absence is excused or not excused.

If a student refuses to attend school or continues to miss school regularly, the school counselor will work with the family and the attendance officer, who may visit the home and escort the student to school. Students with excessive absences may be subject to the following: 1) Required Summer School Attendance, 2) Retention, 3) Child Requiring Assistance (formerly known as Child in Need of Services (CHINS) Petition), 4) 51 A Filing for Neglect.

#### **Unexcused Absences**

Unexcused absences and tardies will be tracked each trimester. The following benchmarks regarding absences and tardies will coincide with specific interventions that McAuliffe will implement in order to assist families with decreasing absences and tardies.

STEP 1: An email will be sent to parent/guardian by a School Counselor for the following each trimester:

- 6 absences from school (excused and unexcused).
- 30 tardies to school (excused and unexcused)

STEP 2: A phone call to parent/guardian will be made by a School Counselor for the following each trimester:

- 12 absences from school (excused and unexcused)
- 60 tardies to school (excused and unexcused)

STEP 3: A letter will be sent via mail to parent/guardian by a School Counselor and parent/guardian will have a meeting with attendance officer:

- 18 absences from school (excused and unexcused)
- 90 tardies to school (excused and unexcused)

**If at any point of the school year, the scholar reaches any of the trimester benchmarks, then notification to parent/guardian will begin. Monitoring attendance is not just for each trimester but throughout the whole school year.**

According to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), a student is considered chronically absent once they have been absent for 36 days out of the school year. Grade level counselors will contact families if a student is approaching “chronically absent” status. Therefore, if a student has 18 or more absences in a school year, parents/guardians will be informed about chronic absenteeism guidelines.

### **Chronic Absenteeism**

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education classifies scholars who have missed 10% or more of days enrolled in school during the year as “chronically absent”. While we understand that each trimester will be different for scholars, our target for each trimester is for scholars to be absent (excused or unexcused) fewer than 6 days.

Any student who accumulates **18 absences (excused or unexcused)** during the school year will be issued a letter of notification to parents/guardians reminding them of the school’s attendance policy and definition of chronic absenteeism.

#### **Excerpts from Massachusetts General Law:**

Chapter 76, Section 1 Regulations of School Attendance - Under current law, every child between the ages of six and sixteen is required to attend school.

Chapter 76, Section 1A Notification of Absence - Requires parent or guardian to furnish the school with a home, work or other emergency telephone number where they can be contacted during the school day. If a student is absent and the school has not been notified by the designated time, the school shall call the telephone number or numbers furnished to inquire about said absence.

Chapter 76, Section 2 Duties of Parents; Penalty - Parents and guardians in control of a child are required to ensure that the child attends school. If a child fails to attend school for seven-day sessions or fourteen half day sessions within any period of six months, the school may file a criminal complaint against the responsible parent or guardian.

Chapter 76, Section 4 Inducing Absences; Penalty - It is against the law to induce or attempt to induce a minor to be absent from school. In addition, it is unlawful to employ or harbor a minor while school is in session.

**What is a Child Requiring Assistance (formerly known as CHINS)?** - “Child requiring assistance”, a child between the ages of 6 and 18 who: (i) repeatedly runs away from the home of the child’s parent, legal guardian or custodian; (ii) repeatedly fails to obey the lawful and reasonable commands of the child’s parent, legal guardian or custodian, thereby interfering with their ability to adequately care for and protect the child; (iii) repeatedly fails to obey the lawful and reasonable regulations of the child’s school; or (iv) is habitually truant.

“Habitually truant”, a school-aged child, not excused from attendance under the lawful and reasonable regulations of such child’s school, who willfully fails to attend school for more than 8 school days in a quarter.

**What is a 51A?** - A 51A is a report of suspected child abuse or neglect that is filed with the Department of Children and Families. Under Chapter 119, section 51A of the Massachusetts General Laws, a report can be filed on behalf of a child under the age of eighteen for educational neglect if a child is not attending school on a regular basis.

The Massachusetts General Laws are available for your review in the school office or at

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/statelaws.html>

<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXVII/Chapter119/Section21>

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has set 95% attendance as a minimum standard in order to appeal a failing grade on state-mandated testing (e.g. MCAS or PARCC).

## Arrival, Dismissal, and Transportation

[General Safety Information](#)

[Walkers](#)

[Bicycles/Skateboards/Scooters/Skates](#)

[Carpool Drop-off and Pick-Up at Newbury Street](#)

[Framingham Bus Transportation](#)

### General Safety Information

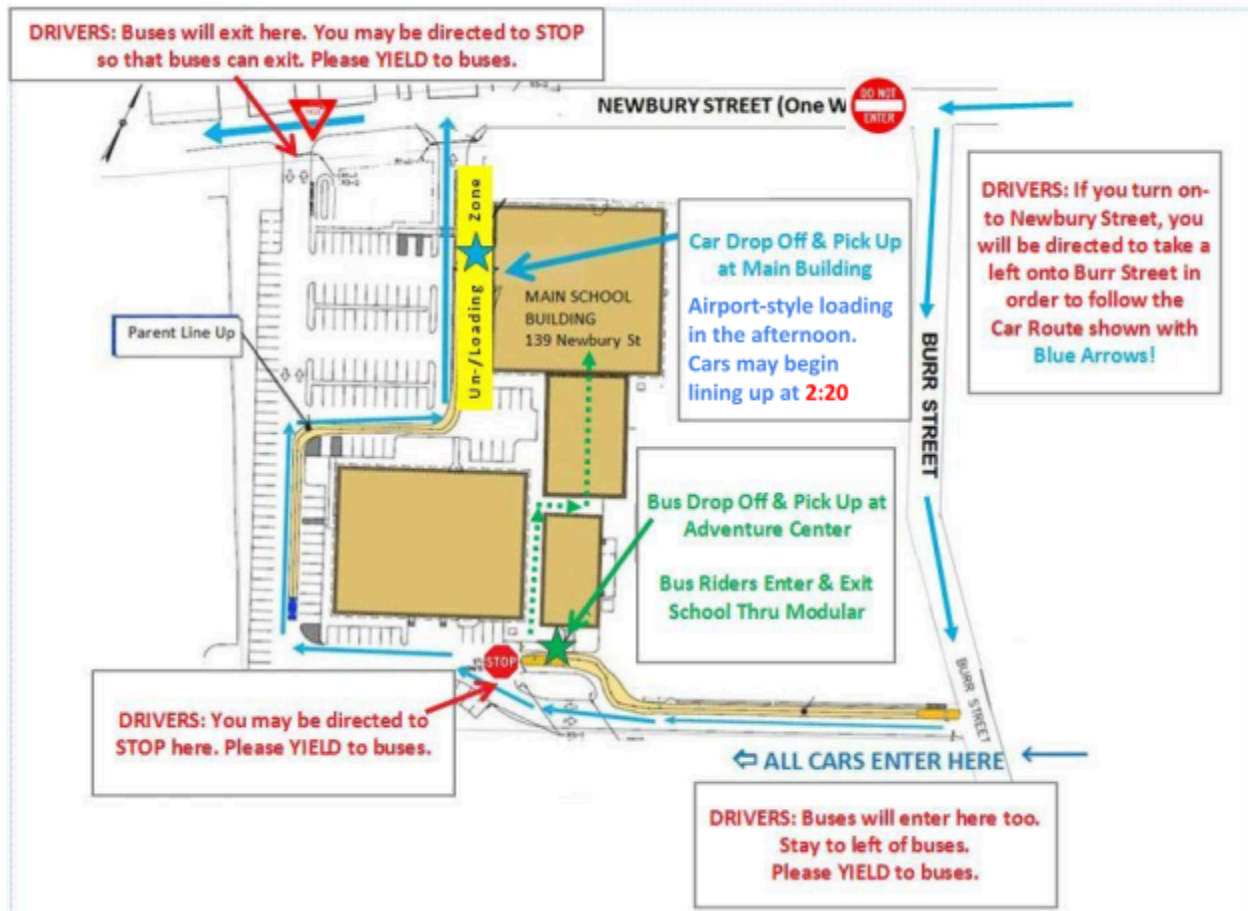
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To ensure the safety of our scholars, it is imperative that all parents, guardians, and scholars follow the school’s procedures for arrival and dismissal. These are very busy times of the day with many people moving around and both buses and cars entering and exiting the campus. Faculty and staff are on duty to facilitate safe arrival and dismissal procedures. Families who need to drop off or pick up a carpool must travel slowly through the campus, be patient while waiting for other vehicles to move, be aware of pedestrians walking to other vehicles or down the sidewalk, and must follow the direction of faculty/staff on duty.

- In the case that scholars do not follow procedures and school rules, school officials will clarify the procedures and ensure that the scholar understands. If procedures continue to not be followed relevant consequences may be assigned.
- In the case that parents or guardians do not follow procedures, school officials will clarify the procedures and ensure that the adult understands. If procedures continue to not be followed, school officials will set up a meeting between the family and the school’s Safety Officer.

### Carpool Drop-off and Pick-Up at Newbury Street

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### Drop-Off

- Drop-off is between 7:45am and 8:00am
- Cars should enter at the Burr St entrance
- \*\*Do NOT use the Newbury St. entrance\*\***
- No cars will be allowed to release students on Newbury Street or enter from Newbury Street
- All students arriving in cars must be dropped off at the main entrance of the school
- Upon entering from Burr Street, parents will be directed along the outlined route to the entrance of the main building
- Students may be released from the right side of the vehicle **ONLY** in the designated unloading zone (sidewalk along the front of the building)
- Please only let your child exit the car in the designated unloading zone in a single lane of traffic
- Cars will exit the parking lot by turning left onto Newbury Street

### Pick-Up

- Pick up is from 2:30-2:45:
- Cars should enter at the Burr St entrance
- \*\*Do NOT use the Newbury St. entrance\*\***
- No students will be permitted to enter cars on Newbury Street
- Students will exit the building from the main entrance of the building and wait for rides on the sidewalk
- Students will only be allowed to enter vehicles on the right side in the loading zone (sidewalk area along the front of the building)
- In the loading zone, during pick up only, there will be 2 lanes of traffic (1 standing lane on the right, and 1 travel lane on the left)
- Once your child is in the vehicle you may pull into the travel lane safely and exit left onto Newbury St

### Framingham Bus Transportation

Scholars who live in Framingham may receive bus transportation to and from school. Sixth-grade scholars who live further than two miles from the school are considered “eligible” for transportation and do not need to pay a bus fee. All other 6th grade scholars are considered “ineligible” and payment is required. All scholars in the 7th and 8th grade will be considered “ineligible”. ALL scholars must fill out a transportation application when they are released in the Spring. McAuliffe families receive a McAuliffe-specific bus application and **DO NOT** apply via the Framingham Public Schools

website. More information can be acquired through the Framingham Transportation Department by calling them at 508-626-9179.

Typically by the end of September, the Framingham Transportation Department will provide the school with bus passes for all McAuliffe scholars who have been assigned a bus. The school will distribute these to our scholars. Once distributed, bus passes will be REQUIRED in order to ride the bus. Scholars will need to show their bus pass to the bus driver when entering the bus - else they will be denied transportation.

Scholars who take the morning bus get picked up at designated bus stops along with scholars who attend Fuller Middle School. When they arrive at Fuller Middle School, McAuliffe scholars transition to one of four or five buses that shuttle scholars to McAuliffe.

Scholars who take the afternoon bus are picked up at McAuliffe on a bus different than their morning bus and are taken directly to their bus stops with no transfers or shuttle buses.

## Walkers

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Scholars who walk to and from school are expected to use sidewalks and crosswalks. Framingham Highway Department leads efforts to clear sidewalks and crosswalks from snow and other debris. If snow or debris needs to be removed from part of your child's route to school, please contact the Framingham Highway Department at (508) 532-6030.

## Bicycles/Skateboards/Scooters/Skates

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Scholars may transport to and from school on bikes, skateboards, and other transportation devices as long as they have parental permission and wear helmets and other protective gear. The school has very limited storage for these items. Scholars are responsible for locking up bicycles and storing other items out of the way before the school day begins. McAuliffe holds no responsibility for items stolen or vandalized.

# Nutrition, Breakfast, Lunch, & Snacks

[Nutrition Policy](#)

[Breakfast, Lunch, and Snacks](#)

[Purchasing Breakfast & Lunch](#)

[Free and Reduced Breakfast and Lunch](#)

[Lunch from Home](#)

[Allergen Precautions](#)

[Snacks](#)

## Nutrition Policy

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McAuliffe will provide students with access to a variety of nutritious and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students and will provide clean, safe and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.

1. All foods made available on campus will comply with the current USDA's Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
2. The following will also comply with the current Massachusetts A La Carte Food and Beverage Standards: food and beverages offered as school incentives and at school celebrations.
3. Nutrition information for products offered as school incentives and at school celebrations will be readily available near the point of purchase.
4. Nutritional information on all school foods will be made available either in hard copy or in electronic form.
5. In accordance with the USDA's nondiscrimination regulation (7 CFR 15b), McAuliffe will work with our food vendor to accommodate meal modification requests for children who are unable to eat certain meals because of their disabilities. Families may request these modifications on the monthly meal order form, or via direct communication with Abby Lyons at [alyons@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:alyons@mcauliffecharter.org).

## Breakfast, Lunch, and Snacks

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All students are assigned a 20-minute lunch period during the day. Half of the grade has lunch at each period while the

other half is at recess. Crew lunch period assignments will rotate at least three times during the year, per trimester. The school may make other adjustments to the lunch schedule based on school schedule or for specific scholars based upon individual needs. Families will be notified in advance in breakfast or lunch schedules have to be adjusted.

### **Free Breakfast & Lunch**

Breakfast and Lunch order forms are sent to families in the Friday newsletter. Order forms are provided a month in advance. Forms must be completed by the designated due date.

Lunch will not be served on early release days which have a dismissal time of 11:35am.

### **Lunch from Home**

Students may also opt to bring their lunch. Many students also bring a snack in case they get hungry in the middle of the morning or afternoon. All foods brought to the school must follow the school's nutrition policy. Students should bring lunch made up of foods that are nutritious instead of lunch foods that will fill them with sugar and caffeine.

### **Allergen Precautions**

Families with students who have allergies must communicate these with the school nurse so that we can develop an Individual Care Plan. Please see more information about allergies in the handbook section about Life-Threatening Allergies.

Because there are scholars with life-threatening allergies in the community, there is a section of the Cafe that is identified as the location where students may eat foods that contain ingredients that other students are allergic to (e.g., nut-butter sandwiches). By containing these allergens to a smaller part of the Cafe, we're making the space safer for those students with allergies. Classrooms may not have foods with allergens in them if there is a student with a life-threatening allergy that takes a class in that room. The school will communicate information to families about classroom snacks annually.

### **Snacks**

Students may bring a snack to school to consume during a time determined appropriate by teachers. Snacks to be consumed in the classroom should not include ingredients that other students are allergic to (e.g., nut-butter, granola bars with nuts, etc).

### **Civil Rights Complaint Policy for Child Nutrition Program**

#### **Policy**

The Christa McAuliffe Charter School will comply with the Civil Rights Requirements outlined in FNS Instruction 113-1 and the 2016 Memorandum of Understanding between United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service Civil Rights Division and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office for Food and Nutrition Programs. If a participant, parent/guardian, or potential participant reports a concern that involves a federally or state protected class we will inform, accept, document, and share the complaint or concern in accordance with the school's procedures.

## **Recess**

[General Information](#)

[Recess Expectations](#)

[Losing Recess Privileges](#)

### **General Information**

Recess is a privilege earned by students who follow the school's expectations. Students may bring equipment such as footballs and frisbees from home, but must use the equipment according to McAuliffe expectations during recess or another authorized time. If students are not using the equipment safely, they will be asked to stop playing and/or they may be asked to give staff the equipment for the day. This will be determined at the discretion of the McAuliffe staff on recess duty.

All Lunch/Recess Monitors will have access to walkie talkies and an emergency kit.

The Director of Culture or designee will monitor the weather and temperature to determine whether it will be an indoor or outdoor recess. Indoor Recess may be held (in lieu of outdoor recess) in the event the temperature index reaches 95 degrees or above as well as 15 degrees or below. Indoor recess may also be held if there is thunder and lightning, persistent rain, snow, ice or any other severe weather concerns.

## Recess Expectations

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The behavioral expectations of students are no different than any other part of the school day. Students are responsible for following the school expectations during lunch and indoor/outdoor recess. In particular, students must be physically safe, engage in prosocial behavior (e.g. no gossiping, talking about students behind backs, etc), and follow adult directions.

## Losing Recess Privileges

As a default, each scholar has the opportunity to go to recess daily. A scholar may lose his/her privilege to go to recess as a consequence for a choice or choices that he/she made. These circumstances include but are not limited to:

- 1) engaging in off-track behavior during class and needing to work on a fix-it plan or make-up class work
- 2) not following expectations during recess
- 3) not socializing safely with other students in an unstructured setting
- 4) behavior plan incentive or consequence,
- 5) repeatedly making a mess during lunch
- 6) part of a reentry plan from a short or long term suspension. Depending on the situation, a student may lose recess privileges for one or more days. The school's aim is for the student to earn back the privilege after completing the consequence(s).

# Code of Conduct & Discipline Policy

2024-25 School Year

[Clique Aqui para Portuguese](#) // [Haga clic aquí para español](#)

## Introduction

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The Christa McAuliffe Charter School strives to create a community anchored in our shared values called Habits of Work and Learning (HOWLs). These are: Collaboration, Responsibility, Inquiry, Perseverance, and Kindness. All members of the McAuliffe community are expected to uphold the HOWLs on a day to day basis by conducting themselves with kindness and respect for self and others. Each member of the community plays an essential role in building and maintaining a safe and secure community that has a primary focus on learning and growth.

McAuliffe's Code of Conduct applies to members of the community at all times during the school day, while on school property, while traveling to and from school, on fieldwork, at any school-related event, during online learning, and while using the McAuliffe internet. The Code of Conduct applies to behavior outside of school if a behavior threatens the safety and security of the community or disrupts the educational process or orderly operation of the school. This includes

behavior on social networking sites or apps (e.g Instagram, Snapchat), texting or messaging.

## Community Responsibilities & Rights

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The Christa McAuliffe Charter School expects all members of our school community to conduct themselves in a positive, self-disciplined manner. As a community, we are all expected to model our Habits of Work and Learning (HOWLs) and hold one another accountable when we're not following them. With this in mind, in addition to adults giving student feedback, students are also expected to give feedback to one another when poor choices are made or when they're on the verge of being made. *We are crew, not passengers*; we have to have each others' backs and help each other follow our community values to the best of our abilities. McAuliffe scholars are taught and expected to be upstanders in the community. In cases where members of the community cause harm, either intentionally or unintentionally, we will work with one another to problem solve, address harm that occurred, and make things right, in part, by attending to relationships.

The following responsibilities and rights are outlined for students, parents/guardians, and employees. No one list is exhaustive, but aims to articulate important responsibilities and rights that these groups of individuals hold at McAuliffe.

### Student Responsibilities

The responsibilities of a McAuliffe student include but are not limited to the following:

1. Be a leader of your own learning
  - Attend school daily and arrive on time
  - Put forth your best effort in all learning endeavors
  - Contribute to a positive learning environment by participating in school/class activities and upholding the McAuliffe Habits of Work and Learning
  - Learn from mistakes and take responsibility for your actions
  - Prepare for and participate in Student Led Conferences, Culminating Events, and Passages
2. Be a responsible member of our community
  - Know and follow school rules and procedures
  - Respect the rights of fellow students, faculty, and others
  - Be honest and courteous
  - Refrain from bullying
  - Maintain beautiful spaces in classrooms, common areas, and outside by "leaving no trace"
  - Consider how your actions will impact our community before you make a choice
3. Proactively support all members of our community
  - Support anyone you suspect is being bullied, including getting help from an adult
  - Include students who are left out in school work and/or social activities
  - Act as upstanders rather than bystanders
  - Report incidents or situations that may threaten or disrupt the school environment
  - Seek advice and assistance to prevent or resolve conflict
  - Respond to adult direction whether the adult is a well known teacher, a lesser known teacher, a guest teacher, counselor, school leader, or any other McAuliffe professional.

### Student Rights

The rights of a McAuliffe student include but are not limited to the following:

1. Learn in a free, high-quality public educational setting
2. Be safe at school (physically, emotionally)
3. Be treated respectfully and fairly by all members of the McAuliffe community
4. Be assisted by McAuliffe faculty and peer mediators to resolve conflicts peacefully and respectfully
5. Communicate your side of the story

6. Be told the reason for a consequence and information about appealing consequences that involve spending time away from the community (e.g., out of school suspension)

### **Parent/Guardian Responsibilities**

The responsibilities of a McAuliffe parent/guardian include but are not limited to:

1. Ensure your child's access to learning and the McAuliffe program
  - Ensure that your child(ren) attends McAuliffe daily and on time
  - Notify McAuliffe if/when your child will be absent (before 8:00am)
  - Provide McAuliffe with accurate and current contact information for you and emergency contacts
  - Communicate with teachers/counselors when something outside of school may impact your child's time at school (e.g., death in the family or of a pet, family conflict/separation/divorce, medicine change, health diagnoses, homelessness, etc)
2. Actively engage in your child's learning process
  - Collaborate with McAuliffe professionals to address academic, social, emotional, health, or behavioral concerns regarding your child
  - Attend your child's Student Led Conferences, Culminating Events and 8th grade Passage Presentation
  - Check the online gradebook consistently to stay on top of your child's academic progress and reach out to a teacher if you have concerns
  - Read your child's trimester progress reports and then sign and return the progress report envelope
3. Uphold values of the McAuliffe community
  - Guide your child to follow school wide HOWLs, norms, rules, and procedures and to make choices that positively impact the community
  - Guide your child to take responsibility for actions and "make it right" if your child makes a poor choice
  - Be respectful and courteous to all members of the McAuliffe community, including their right to privacy
  - Communicate feedback, concerns, or complaints to McAuliffe professionals in a timely and respectful manner

### **Parent/Guardian Rights**

The rights of a McAuliffe parent/guardian include but are not limited to the following:

1. Be actively involved in your child's education
2. Be treated fairly and respectfully by all members of the McAuliffe community
3. Receive communication from school personnel about your child's academic, social, emotional, or behavioral progress/well-being, including patterns of poor attendance, in your primary language.
4. Receive trimester progress reports about your child's progress academically and with HOWLs and access to the school's online gradebook
5. Access an interpreter for a parent-teacher meeting to take place in your primary language.
6. The opportunity to schedule meetings with McAuliffe professionals including but not limited to your child's crew leader, teachers, counselor, and/or a school leader
7. Be notified by school personnel
  - if your child is the target of another's behavior
  - if your child engages in behavior that warrants significant time spent outside of the classroom such as, after school and lunch/recess consequences.
  - If your child is sent to the lunch and recess consequence room for actions during lunch and recess, you may be notified.
  - if your child engages in behavior that warrants completing fix it planning tasks after school or behavior that requires a meeting between professional, parent/guardian, and student
  - If your child refuses to attend consequences assigned by teachers and staff.
8. Be notified by the Director of Culture or a designee (typically another school leader) if your child's behavior warrants spending substantial time away from a particular class, or away from classes for a day in an in or out of school suspension

9. Receive verbal and written communication about consequences that include in or out of school suspensions as well as verbal and written communication about hearing and appeal processes for long and short term out of school suspensions

## Employee Responsibilities

The responsibilities of a McAuliffe employee -- with regard to code of conduct -- include but are not limited to:

1. Ensure student access to learning and the McAuliffe program
  - Maximize student time on learning and in the classroom or virtual classroom (e.g., minimize time out of the classroom)
  - Create an engaging learning environment where all students are welcomed and included
  - Give students positive praise and constructive feedback that is kind, specific, and helpful
  - Teach, re-teach, and model clear behavioral expectations and HOWLs to all students
  - Coordinate communication with parents/guardians in their primary language by consulting with the school's Trilingual Outreach Coordinator, including interpretation via phone or in an in person meeting
  - Communicate with the parents/guardians of a student engaging in challenging classroom behaviors and/or to arrange consequences to take place before or after school, including setting up a meeting with a parent/guardian
2. Be a responsible member of our community & support all members of our community
  - Contribute to a positive learning environment by upholding McAuliffe's HOWLs and schoolwide norms
  - Communicate feedback, concerns, or complaints to McAuliffe school leaders in a timely and respectful manner
  - Participate in crucial conversations with colleagues
  - Review the circumstances surrounding each situation and exercise discretion to create relevant, respectful, realistic interventions and consequences that also attend to relationships of those involved
  - Have each others' backs: offer assistance; respond when a colleague seeks assistance
  - Treat all members of the McAuliffe community fairly and with respect
  - Consistently reinforce school-wide behavior and learning expectations for all students; address student behavior if you see it
  - Apply the McAuliffe Code of Conduct in a non-discriminatory manner; to do this, actively examine your own biases and monitor patterns in your response to behaviors, delivery of consequences
  - Identify and respond to students' social, emotional, and/or behavioral health needs including referring students to counselors for additional support when necessary
  - Intervene early and use de-escalation strategies to respond to challenging behavior
  - Recognize instances where bullying or harassment may be taking place (even if subtle) and reporting these to a school counselor
  - Report any signs of possible neglect, abuse, self-harm, suicidal ideation, homelessness, substance use or abuse, or other concerning symptoms to school counselors and the Director of Culture (mandated reporting)
  - Participate in any investigation related to a student or students threatening or harming the school's safety and security, including work with the school's Safety Officer
  - Teach and facilitate emergency lockdown and evacuation procedures

## Employee Rights

The right of a McAuliffe employee include but are not limited to the following:

1. Work in a safe and supportive learning environment
2. Be treated respectfully and courteously
3. Receive high quality professional development through on and off-site training opportunities, coaching, and collaborative planning time in departments and grade levels
4. Receive regular feedback on and time to reflect on professional practices and goals through coaching, tracking progress toward goals, mid-year evaluation, and end of year evaluation
5. Ask for and receive help in a non-judgmental and supportive fashion

6. Use professional discretion to seek support from a counselor or school leader
7. Contribute to decision-making regarding student consequences and the development of fix-it plans
8. The opportunity to share your experience for any safety/threatening behavior that you were witness to prior to a student being assigned consequences
9. Receive timely communication about situations that involve one of your students engaging in behavior that is threatening to the safety and security of the community

### **Nondiscrimination Policy**

The Christa McAuliffe Charter School (McAuliffe) does not tolerate harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, homelessness, or limited English proficiency (M.G.L. c. 71, § 89(m); 603 CMR 1.06(l)). For questions about compliance or to communicate a grievance, please contact the individuals listed below who together serve to coordinate compliance under Title IX and Section 504.

John Ermilio  
Director of Business & HR  
508-879-9000x616  
[jermilio@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:jermilio@mcauliffecharter.org)

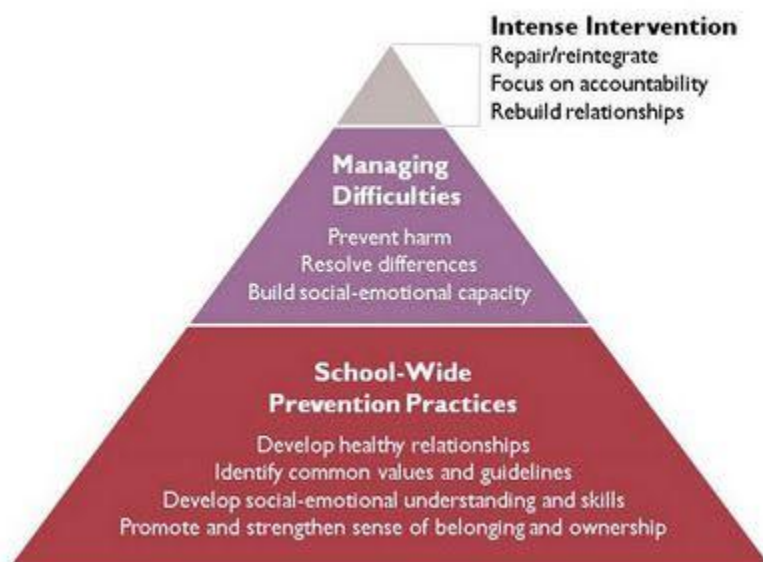
Tony Fratantonio  
Director of Culture  
508-879-9000x133  
[afratantonio@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:afratantonio@mcauliffecharter.org)

Michelle Arons  
Director of Student Services  
508-879-9000x431  
[marons@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:marons@mcauliffecharter.org)

Noel Green  
Executive Director  
508-879-9000x613  
[ngreen@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:ngreen@mcauliffecharter.org)

## **Prevention, Managing Difficulties, and Intense Intervention**

McAuliffe employs a 3-tiered set of practices that balance proactive school-wide prevention practices, responsive practices to manage difficulties, and intervention practices that include relationship reparation and support for all parties involved. The image below outlines the school’s philosophy and indicates that the majority of our efforts should be focused on prevention so that there are fewer difficulties to manage, and even fewer incidents that require intense intervention.



At McAuliffe we understand that individuals may make poor choices and difficulties may arise. We treat these times as growth opportunities for those involved. When a behavior or choice negatively impacts one or more members of the community, we are collectively responsible for attending to the person or people who were harmed and their needs as

much as the person or people who caused the harm. This is the foundational purpose of restorative practices that we are committed to employing with greater and greater fidelity at McAuliffe.

## Consequences and Relationship Restoration

*“Restorative justice is a process to involve, to the extent possible, those who have a stake in a specific offense and to collectively identify and address harms, needs and obligations, in order to heal and put things as right as possible,”*  
Howard Zehr, *The Little Book of Restorative Justice*.<sup>1</sup>

The following principles guide our responses to poor choices and harm done to the community:

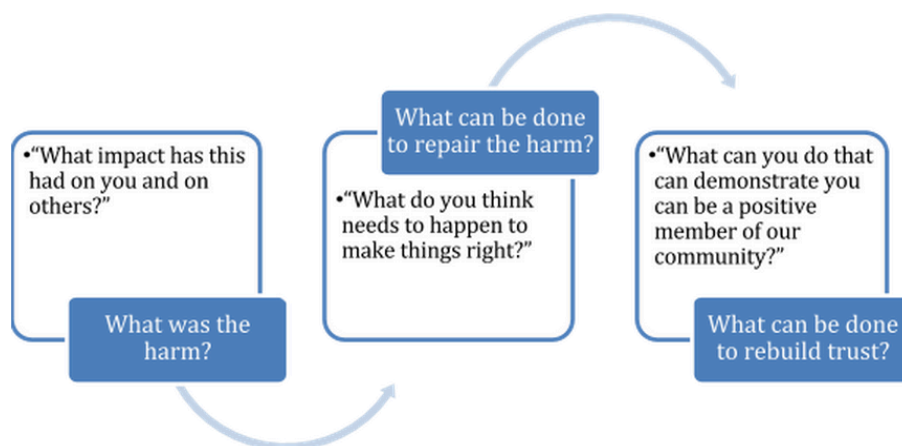
1. Acknowledge that relationships are central to building community
2. Address misbehavior and harm in a way that strengthens relationships
3. Focus on the harm done rather than only on rule-breaking
4. Give voice to the person harmed
5. Engage in collaborative problem-solving
6. Empower change and growth
7. Enhance responsibility
8. Assign consequences not punishments (e.g. we do not give generic detentions)
9. Design consequences that are relevant, respectful, realistic, and attend to relationship(s)

### Adult-Student Conference as a Consequence

Contrary to many school discipline models, at McAuliffe, having dialogue with an individual who caused harm and process the difficulties that occurred is in itself a consequence. Why? Because this process guides the individual to make sense of his/her actions, consider the harm done and obligations to make things right, including restoration of the relationships. These conversations may take place in the moment in a classroom, at lunch or recess, in the hallway, etc. They may also take place at another moment when the adult and student have a chance to speak face to face without being interrupted, when both are ready to talk, and/or when there is privacy. Sometimes a conversation will need to take place during lunch/recess, before school, or after school, and sometimes they should take place with parent(s)/guardian(s).

Why is this a consequence? Remember, a consequence is not a punishment. A consequence is something that takes place to respond to harm done -- something that is relevant, realistic, respectful, and attends to relationships. A dialogue between an adult and student is just that.

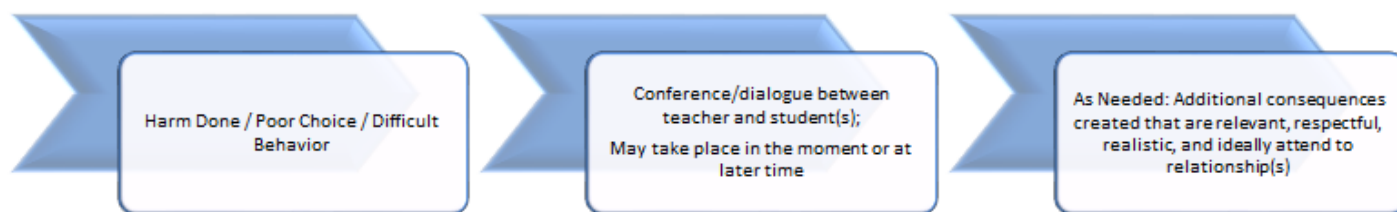
The following questions guide reflection and conversations with those who caused harmed and those who were harmed:



<sup>1</sup> Zehr, H. (2015). *The little book of restorative justice*, p40. New York, NY: Good Books.

## Other Consequences

During the conference it may be determined that the individual involved needs to do other things to “make it right”. These can also be considered consequences as long as the actions involve the student taking responsibility for his/her harm done and so long as the actions are relevant, realistic, respectful, and ideally attend to relationships. For example, the student may need to write an apology letter, practice saying a verbal apology, and then make the apology; she might need to call her parents/guardians to fill them in on what happened in class and share the plan for making things right; he might need to stay after school to help clean the classroom (if the behavior involved harming the room environment in some way); two students might need to participate in problem solving mediated by a crew leader or counselor; she might need to develop a pro-social script and practice it during recess or before/after school; he/she may need to complete an assignment or do research on a topic as a way to educate themselves about how they caused harm in the community. Each situation is unique and consequences can be uniquely tailored to the offense in order to make things right.



**Generic detentions will NOT be assigned at McAuliffe:** Any time a student needs to stay in for lunch/recess, come to school before school, or stay after school, there must be a specific purpose for how they’ll be spending their time to “make it right”. We will not call those times “detentions” which has a punitive connotation. Instead we will refer to the consequence as a “learning experience” or by the activity that is taking place: conference, meeting, fix-it planning, writing an apology, community building project, completing work due to missed time in class caused by behavior issues, etc.

## Responding to Unsafe and Substantially Disruptive Behaviors

When determining how to respond to student behavior, adults first consider safety and security of the community. Adults will promptly respond to behaviors that immediately threaten the safety and security of the community or which substantially disrupt the community, by removing the aggressor(s) from the classroom or group setting and following the school’s crisis response protocol. When a student makes a choice that breaks a school norm or rule and which does not immediately threaten the safety/security of the community, adults will have dialogue with the student to address the difficulty and as needed determine any other relevant, respectful, and realistic consequence. See above for examples.

### Unsafe and Substantially Disruptive Behaviors

When a student engages in a behavior that is threatening to the safety and security of his/herself or the community or engages in a behavior that substantially disrupts the educational process and community, McAuliffe professionals employ a crisis response protocol.

Examples of behaviors that initiate a crisis response and are more likely to receive consequence of in or out of school suspension include:

- Engaging in physical harm to self or others
- Threatening any member or part of the community (verbally, physically, written, via social media, text, false threats, etc)
- Bullying behaviors including pattern of provocation or bothersome behaviors to a specific student
- Harassment or sexual harassment
- Out of control behavior including tantrums, aggressively moving furniture, storming around the room
- Verbal outburst including yelling or screaming
- Swearing at a professional or student or other comparable scenario (Note: this is distinct from a student reacting to a mistake and saying sh\*\*)

- Sexualized behavior or sexual assault
- Allegation of possession or use of illegal substances (alcohol, drugs, etc)
- Allegation of possession or or threatening possession of a weapon (including bomb)
- Allegation of theft
- Fire setting
- Damaging school property / equipment or any individual's property including vandalism
- Use of derogatory language, symbol, or other communication targeting a specific group of people defined in the school's civil rights policy (e.g. gender, race, religion, sexuality, origin, etc)
- Unauthorized leaving of campus grounds

## Crisis Response

Goals for implementation of crisis response include:

1. Maintain or establish safety and security for the individual(s) involved and the community
2. Move the individual(s) causing or threatening harm to self or others away from the group
3. Attend to the immediate needs of those harmed by the behavior
4. De-escalate and guide the individual(s) to a calm state of mind
5. Communicate with parent(s)/guardian(s)
6. Learn the full situation including contributions of those involved, precipitating factors, and related events
7. As required or as needed (per school official discretion), involve police, fire, mental health, emergency medical professionals, and/or other relevant professionals
8. Ensure protection of the rights of those involved including students, employees, and parents/guardians.

McAuliffe professionals are annually trained to implement the crisis response protocol. The protocol is reviewed annually and is outlined in the school's Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy and Procedures.

In many situations, the behavior that prompts the implementation of a crisis response protocol calls for an investigation into what happened. The next section outlines the preliminary investigation process. In other situations the crisis response protocol results in a student receiving mental health intervention through work with Advocates and/or Emergency Medical Technicians.

## Safety Investigation

A school official will be designated by the Executive Director or designee to facilitate a safety investigation that builds a comprehensive understanding of the situation, those involved and their contributions to the situation, and any underlying or ongoing issues that may have contributed to the situation. In some cases, the Executive Director or designee will contact the Framingham Police Safety Officer for consult. Depending on the nature of the situation, either school officials or the Safety Officer will take the lead in investigating the behavior. In cases when the Safety Officer takes the lead, the school works collaboratively with the officer(s) including contacting families, arranging meetings between student/parent/guardian/officer/employees, viewing video footage, etc. See the school's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Framingham Police Department for additional information.

1. During the investigation the student typically continues his/her learning away from the larger classroom environment. Removal from the group is, in itself, a consequence. The school is responsible for keeping track of the time a student spends out of class and providing them access to the learning they miss as much as possible during the time out of the class. In addition, there is important reflection and dialogue that takes place during this time. Namely, this is the time during which the student who allegedly caused or threatened harm or substantial disruption to the community will, once calm and ready to talk, be asked to share his/her side of the story during a conversation with a school official. The student will be asked questions that guide him/her to process the incident and to be sure that the school official has a full understanding of the student's perspective.

In some cases, the school official may consult with a counselor, teacher, or another school leader to determine whether the student is allowed to return to class while the safety investigation continues; sometimes the student is allowed to return with additional monitoring and fewer privileges (e.g. walked from class to class, no recess, check in with school leader or counselor at the start of the day, etc).

2. The school official will notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the incident and status of the investigation. We aim for an investigation to take place within one school day, but on some occasions the timeline may take more than one day. If necessary, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified of the need for the student's immediate emergency removal from the school community. See "Emergency Removal" section of the policy.
3. In cases that do not involve a safety officer, the designated school official conducts an investigation which includes but is not limited to:
  - a. Meeting with the individual who allegedly harmed or threatened harm to others (see "a" above).
  - b. Meeting with individuals who witnessed the behavior and/or who were harmed in order to hear their experiences: Each individual will be asked questions that guide him/her to process the incident and to be sure that the school official has a full understanding of each individual's perspective.
  - c. As relevant, reviewing video (when available), examining other information that explains the situation (email, social media, texting records, handwritten notes or drawings, etc.).

### Search & Seizure

- d. If the situation involves allegations of a student having in his/her possession an illegal substance or weapon, the school reserves the right to conduct a search of the student's property following all relevant laws and regulations. The student will be asked to cooperate in the search of the student's backpack, shoes, pockets, etc. The search will be conducted by two members of faculty to ensure appropriate procedures are followed. The student will be asked to assist school officials.
  - e. In the case that an illegal substance or weapon is discovered, the school official will promptly notify the Framingham Police Department's School Resource Officer.
4. As needed, the school official recommends additional consequences for the individual(s) involved that are relevant, realistic, respectful, and include relationship repair. The following information helps to inform the creation of consequences:
    - a. Input from the individual on "how to make things right"
    - b. Input from those impacted or harmed by the behavior: "how to make things right"
    - c. Degree to which the student is taking responsibility for the behavior and showing remorse
    - d. Severity of disruption to the class or community
    - e. Degree of danger to self and/or others
    - f. Pattern(s) of behavior
    - g. Other relevant information such as disability status, mental health, CRA, etc

Additional consequences may include but are not limited to:

- a. Conflict resolution
- b. Mediation or peer mediation
- c. Community service projects or work project
- d. Assisting a teacher, coach, or staff during the day or after school
- e. Writing and delivering apology letters
- f. Interviewing teachers and classmates to learn more about the impact of behavior on the class and community
- g. Writing scripts and role-playing to practice communication skills
- h. Spending time away from crew, a particular class, or the full student community for a designated period of time. During this time, the student will work on academic tasks he/she is missing by not being in class and will be responsible for completing other consequences (e.g. writing and practicing the delivery of apologies). There may be other times when a student's choice calls for a consequence to be away from the community for a period of time. Technically, we'll refer to these times as either **in or out of school suspensions (short or long term, depending on the length)**. When appropriate, in school suspension is used as an alternative to out of school suspension. For these, the school will follow the state law/regulations accordingly. However, there will be a robust fix-it plan for the student to work through

during the time away from the community, in addition to academic tasks. The section about suspensions outlines due process for in school, short and long term suspensions.

5. The school may also recommend that a student receive additional support, services, or assessment, especially if there is a pattern of behavior in order to help students improve upon their lagging skills. The school will communicate these with the parents/guardians to share resources, procedures, and consider options:
  - a. Participate in a social thinking class (lab at McAuliffe)
  - b. Participate in a lunch bunch
  - c. Establish a positive behavior support plan
  - d. Participate in therapy or targeted therapy (e.g. anger management, develop coping mechanisms for anxiety or frustration tolerance, etc)
  - e. Sign release for school counselor and outside mental health clinician to communicate
  - f. Consult with physician and/or psychiatrist; medicine evaluation (e.g. student is already taking medication but change has caused irritability, etc)
  - g. Conduct a functional behavior assessment or another specific assessment to help us understand the pattern of behavior
  - h. Convene a 504 or IEP meeting
  - i. Initiate a 45 day assessment
  
6. Important Note about Expulsion Hearings: Certain disciplinary situations, including disciplinary action under M.G.L. c. 71, sec 37H1/2 (felony charges and felony convictions) and serious cases that involve the possession/use/distribution or illegal substance or weapons, assault, vandalism or violation of a student's civil rights, warrant consideration of holding an Expulsion Hearing. Please see the Expulsion Policy articulated further in this document for more information.

## Suspensions

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Similar to detentions, suspensions will not be assigned merely as a punishment for a behavior. However, there are times when a student will need to spend time away from a particular group in the school (crew, or a class or classes), and there are times when a student will need to spend time away from the majority of the community (by serving an in-school suspension) or the whole community (by serving an out-of-school suspension). When appropriate, in school suspension is used as an alternative to out of school suspension. Any suspension, whether in or out of school, is accompanied by academic work for the student to complete as well as a fix it plan that outlines consequences for the harm done to the community. Each fix-it plan is individualized and is built with input from the student, those harmed, and often the crew leader and/or counselor. The following information outlines the school's processes and procedures related to in and out of school suspensions.

For any in or out-of-school suspension, the Christa McAuliffe Charter School adheres to the Student Discipline Laws and Regulations as set forth in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, sec 37H, 37 H1/2 and 37 H ¾ and 603 CMR 53.00 et seq. "All in-school and out of school suspensions are submitted in PowerSchool, our digital database, and filed under the student's record in PowerSchool. All suspension letters are placed in the student's cumulative file maintained in a safe and secure place."

## In-School Suspension Procedures

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A student may be removed from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for up to ten (10) consecutive school days or up to ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. Students who are placed in partial or full-day in-school suspension shall have the opportunity to make-up assignments, assessments, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the in-school suspension. In addition, students who receive the consequence of an in-school suspension may be assigned additional tasks that encourage

reflection and guide the student to take responsibility for his/her behavior. Activities may include but are not limited to 1) written reflection, 2) counseling, 3) conflict resolution, 4) preparing apologies.

### **Notice of In-School Suspension**

The Director of Culture or his/her designee shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student with an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the Director of Culture or his/her designee determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Director of Culture or his/her designee shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed ten (10) days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the Director of Culture or his/her designee shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension.

On the day of the suspension, the Director of Culture or his/her designee shall send written notice (by hand-delivery, certified mail, first class mail or email) to the student and parent/guardian including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent/guardian to a meeting if the meeting has not already occurred. The notice shall be in English and the primary language of the home if another language is identified in the home language survey, or by other means, as appropriate.

### **Parent/Guardian Meeting**

The Director of Culture or his/her designee shall also invite the parent/guardian to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such a meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the Director of Culture or his/her designee is unable to reach the parent/guardian after making and documenting at least (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent/guardian of the in-school suspension.

### **No Right to Appeal**

The decision of the Director of Culture or his/her designee is the final decision for in-school suspensions not exceeding ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year.

## **Out-of-School Suspension Procedures**

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### **Due Process Procedures for Out-of-School Suspensions**

There are two types of out-of-school suspensions, Short-Term Suspensions and Long-Term Suspensions. The Director of Culture or his/her designee shall determine the extent of the rights to be afforded the student at a disciplinary hearing based on the anticipated consequences for the disciplinary offense. If the consequence may be long-term suspension from school, the Director of Culture or his/her designee shall afford the student additional rights as described below, in addition to those rights afforded to students who may face a short-term suspension from school. All students facing out-of-school suspension shall have the right to oral and written notice, as described below.

### **Notice for Any Out-of-School Suspension**

Prior to suspending a student, the Director of Culture or his/her designee will provide the student and the Parent/guardian oral and written notice of the possible suspension, an opportunity for the student to have a hearing and the opportunity of the parent/guardian(s) to participate in the hearing. The notice will be in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English as identified in the home language survey, or by other means of communication where appropriate. The notice will set forth in plain language:

1. the disciplinary offense;
2. the basis for the charge;

3. the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
4. the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the Director of Culture or his/her designee concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent/guardian to attend the hearing;
5. the date, time, and location of the hearing;
6. the right of the student and the student's parent/guardian to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;
7. if the student may be placed on long-term suspension following the hearing with the Director of Culture or his/her designee:
  - a. the rights set forth in 603 CMR 53.08(3)(b) ; and
  - b. the right to appeal the Director of Culture or his/her designee decision to the Executive Director<sup>2</sup>.

The Director of Culture or his/her designee shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. Prior to conducting a hearing without the parent/guardian present, the Director of Culture or his/her designee will document reasonable efforts to include the parent/guardian. The Director of Culture or his/her designee is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the Director of Culture or his/her designee has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent/guardian in the manner specified by the parent/guardian for emergency notification.

Written notice to the parent/guardian may be made by hand delivery, first-class mail, certified mail, email to an address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the Director of Culture or his/her designee and parent/guardian.

### **Emergency Removal of Student**

Under certain emergency circumstances, it may not be practical for the Director of Culture or his/her designee to provide prior oral and written notice before removing a student from school. The Director of Culture or his/her designee may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the Director of Culture's or his/her designee judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The Director of Culture or his/her designee will immediately notify the Executive Director in writing of the removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger presented by the student.

The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the Director of Culture or his/her designee shall:

1. Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent/guardian of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, the potential consequences, including potential length of suspension, the opportunity for a hearing including the date/time/location of the hearing, the right to interpreter services, and other rights permitted for students who may be placed on long-term suspension as set forth in 603 CMR. 53.08(3)(b);
2. Provide written notice to the student and parent/guardian, including the information described in 603 CMR 53.06(2);
3. Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the Director of Culture or his/her designee that complies with 603 CMR 53.08(2) or 53.08(3), as applicable, and the parent/guardian an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the Director of Culture or his/her designee, student, and parent/guardian.
4. Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(2)(c) and 53.08(2)(d) or 603 CMR 53.08(3)(c) and 53.08(3)(d), as applicable.

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<sup>2</sup> At McAuliffe, the Executive Director serves as the "superintendent" for the purposes of [603 CMR 53.00](#).

A Director of Culture or his/her designee will not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

## Short-Term Suspension Procedures

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A Short-Term Suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. The Director of Culture, or his/her designee, may, in his/her discretion, assign a student the consequence of serving a short-term suspension from school. Any student facing a potential short-term suspension is entitled to a hearing with the Director of Culture or his/her designee with the following process:

### Director of Culture Hearing - Short-term Suspension

1. The purpose of the hearing with the Director of Culture or his/her designee is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the Director of Culture or his/her designee shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts that the Director of Culture or his/her designee should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as alternatives to suspension. The Director of Culture or his/her designee shall provide the parent/guardian, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and present information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Director of Culture or his/her designee should consider in determining appropriate remedies and consequences for the student.
2. Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the Director of Culture or his/her designee shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.
3. The Director of Culture or his/her designee shall notify the student and parent/guardian of the determination and the reason for it, and if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make-up assignments and other school work needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in 603 CMR 53.13(1). The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.

### No Right to Appeal

The decision of the Director of Culture or his/her designee is the final decision for short-term out-of-school suspensions not exceeding ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year.

## Long-Term Suspension Procedures

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A Long-Term Suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. A long term suspension can be in or out of school so long as the removal is for more than ten (10) days. The Director of Culture or his/her designee may, in his/her discretion, assign a student the consequence of serving a long-term suspension from school. Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, §37 H, or in Massachusetts General laws Chapter 71 § 37H ½, no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than ninety (90) school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed. Any student facing a potential long-term suspension is entitled to a hearing with the Director of Culture or his/her designee with the following process

### Director of Culture Hearing - Long-term Suspension

1. The purpose of the hearing with the Director of Culture or his/her designee is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to

dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the Director of Culture or his/her designee shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the Director of Culture or his/her designee should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as alternatives to suspension. The Director of Culture or his/her designee shall provide the parent/guardian, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Director of Culture or his/her designee should consider in determining consequences for the student.

2. In addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following additional rights:
  - a. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the Director of Culture or his/her designee may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
  - b. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent/guardian's expense;
  - c. the right to produce witnesses and explanation of the incident;
  - d. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school;
  - e. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the Director of Culture or his/her designee, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent/guardian requests an audio recording, the Director of Culture or his/her designee shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent/guardian upon request.
3. The Director of Culture or his/her designee shall provide the parent/guardian, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Director of Culture or his/her designee should consider in determining consequences for the student.
4. Based on the evidence, the Director of Culture or his/her designee shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The Director of Culture or his/her designee shall send a written determination to the student and parent/guardian by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to the address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the Director of Culture or his/her designee and the parent/guardian. If the Director of Culture or his/her designee decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall:
  - a. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
  - b. Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the Director of Culture or his/her designee;
  - c. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
  - d. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school;
  - e. Inform the student of the right to appeal the Director of Culture or his/her designee decision to the Executive Director or designee, but only if the Director of Culture or his/her designee has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English as determined by the home language survey, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language:
    - i. the process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent/guardian must file a written notice of appeal with the Executive Director within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension or request an extension for filing for up to seven (7) days;
    - ii. the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Executive Director decides to reverse the Director of Culture or his/her designee determination on appeal.

**Executive Director's Appeal Hearing:**

1. A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the Director of Culture or his/her designee shall have the right to appeal the Director of Culture or his/her designee decision to the Executive Director.
2. The student or parent/guardian shall file a notice of appeal with the Executive Director within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent/guardian may request and receive from the Executive Director an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days. If the appeal is not timely filed, the Executive Director may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.
3. The Executive Director shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent/guardian requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the Executive Director shall grant the extension.
4. The Executive Director shall make a good faith effort to include the parent/guardian in the hearing. The Executive Director shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent/guardian and Executive Director to participate. The Executive Director shall send written notice to the parent/guardian of the date, time, and location of the hearing.
5. The Executive Director shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The Executive Director shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent/guardian upon request. The Executive Director shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent/guardian upon request.
6. The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the Director of Culture or his/her designee hearing for long-term suspension.
7. The Executive Director shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(3)(c)1 through 5. If the Executive Director determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Executive Director may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the Director of Culture or his/her designee, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the Director of Culture or his/her designee decision.
8. The decision of the Executive Director shall be the final decision of the school, with regard to the suspension.

**Re-Entry Meeting From a Suspension**

A mandatory re-entry meeting with a school official or counselor will be scheduled prior to a student's return to school. The school official or counselor will make every effort to schedule the meeting for a time when the student's parent/guardian(s) can be in attendance. Only in rare cases will a student return to school without his/her parent/guardian(s) attending the re-entry meeting. Other McAuliffe professionals may attend the re-entry meeting as needed. These individuals include a) Crew Leader, b) Counselor, c) Safety Officer, d) Executive Director.

The re-entry meeting serves to accomplish the following:

1. Provide a supportive transition for the student to re-enter the McAuliffe community
2. Set clear expectations for the student's return to classes and the community
3. Review re-entry plan which may include but is not limited to i) check-ins with Director of Culture or his/her designee, ii) modified schedule (e.g. modified lunch/recess plan), iii) behavior plan, iv) mediation
4. Engage the parent/guardians or guardians in discussions of the student's misconduct

**Long-Term Suspension/Expulsion Procedures for Special Circumstances**

The long-term suspension or expulsion of a student from school will be in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section, 37H. The grounds for long term suspension or expulsion include but are not limited to the following:

1. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun, a knife, or their facsimile, or anything used in the commission of assault and battery; or a controlled substance as defined in Chapter 94 C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to long-term suspension or expulsion from the school by the Director of Culture or his/her designee.
2. Any student who assaults a school leader, teacher, teacher's aide, or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to long-term suspension or expulsion from the school by the Director of Culture or his/her designee.

Due process for a student who is subject to an expulsion or a long-term suspension as a result of possessing drugs/weapons or assaulting school staff includes:

1. A student shall receive written notice before the expulsion or a long-term suspension takes place and written notice of the right to appeal.
2. The student shall be given an opportunity for a hearing and the opportunity to present witnesses and evidence. The student may have an attorney at their own expense.
3. Following the hearing, the Director of Culture or his/her designee may, in his/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel the student.
4. The student may appeal the expulsion or long-term suspension to the Executive Director provided the appeal is requested in writing, within ten (10) calendar days following the long-term suspension or expulsion.
5. At the appeal hearing the student may be represented by an attorney and may present oral and written testimony.
6. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of MGL c. 71 Section 37H.
7. The Executive Director's decision is final.
8. Any student who is suspended or expelled for more than ten (10) consecutive days shall have the opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

## Procedures for Students with Felony Complaint or Conviction

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In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71 (§37 H ½), Director of Culture or his/her designee has the authority to suspend students charged with a felony and expel or issue a long-term suspension to students convicted or adjudicated of committing a felony if the Director of Culture or his/her designee has determined that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Due process for a student who is subject to suspension as a result of a felony charge includes:

1. The student shall receive written notice before the suspension takes effect and written notice of the right to appeal.
2. The student shall be given an opportunity to respond to the charges before the suspension takes effect.
3. The student may appeal the suspension to the Executive Director, provided the appeal is requested in writing within five (5) calendar days following the suspension.
4. The Executive Director must hold the appeal hearing within three (3) calendar days of the request.
5. At the appeal hearing the student may be represented by an attorney. The student has the right to present oral or written testimony on his/her behalf.
6. The Executive Director must render a decision within five (5) calendar days.
7. The Executive Director's decision is final.
8. Any student who is suspended or expelled pursuant to this section shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his/her removal.
9. Any student who is suspended or expelled for more than ten (10) consecutive days shall have the opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

Due process for a student who is subject to an expulsion or a long-term suspension as a result of a felony conviction includes:

1. A student shall receive written notice before the expulsion or a long-term suspension takes place and written notice of the right to appeal.
2. The student shall be given an opportunity to respond to the charges.
3. The student may appeal the expulsion or long-term suspension to the Executive Director provided the appeal is requested in writing, within five (5) calendar days following the expulsion.
4. The Executive Director must hold the appeal hearing within three (3) calendar days of the request.
5. At the appeal hearing the student may be represented by an attorney and may present oral and written testimony.
6. The Executive Director must render a decision within five (5) calendar days.
7. The Executive Director's decision is final. Any student who is suspended or expelled for more than ten (10) consecutive days shall have the opportunity to receive education services and made academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

## Academic Services & Progress Under Sections 37H, 37H½ and 37H¾

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Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion is expected to make-up assignments, assessments, and other school work in order to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The Director of Culture or his/her designee shall inform the student and parent/guardian of this expectation in writing when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress during the period of removal. Education services may include tutoring at the public library or on a Saturday and online learning and assignments.

The Director of Culture or his/her designee shall notify the parent/guardian and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English as determined by the home language survey, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school staff member who can provide more detailed information. Education services shall be based on, and provided in a manner consistent with the student's course curriculum (and so aligned with the state standards and curriculum frameworks). McAuliffe will develop education service plans adapted to each student's learning profile and the course curriculum. Services offered to students who are suspended for 10 days or more (consecutively and/or cumulatively) are apt to include a combination of tutoring at the public library and online learning and assignments.

The Director of Culture or designee is responsible for verifying enrollment of the student in the service (e.g. participating in the scheduled tutoring).

## Assigning Consequences to Students with Disabilities

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In general, all students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in the family handbook and the school's Discipline Ladder. In accordance with Chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws and with federal law IDEA 2004: Section 615 (k), and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: 29 U.S.C. Section 794 (A), the school may suspend or remove the student from his or her current placement for no more than 10 school days. Special provisions are outlined below for students with a documented disability who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a Section 504 Plan.

### Procedures for suspension of students with a disability when suspension does not exceed 10 school days

1. Any student with a disability may be suspended for up to ten (10) days during a school year. Disciplinary decisions are the same as for students without disabilities.
2. Special circumstances exist if the student: possesses, uses, sells or solicits illegal drugs or a controlled substance on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event; carries a weapon to school or a school-sponsored event; or inflicts serious bodily harm upon another person at school or a school-sponsored event. Under these circumstances, the Director of Student Services or his/her designee may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days. The student may remain in this IAES for a period of time not to exceed 45 school days. Thereafter, the student will return to the previously agreed-upon placement unless a hearing officer has ordered another placement, or the team agrees to another placement.

### Procedures for suspension of students with a disability when suspension exceeds 10 school days

1. If the student is suspended for more than 10 consecutive school days or more than 10 cumulative days which constitutes a pattern of behavior in a school year, this removal is considered a "change of placement". A change of placement invokes certain procedural protections under federal special education law and Section 504.
2. If suspensions exceed 10 consecutive school days, for students with disabilities, the authority of a hearing officer can be accessed if there is evidence that the student is "substantially likely" to injure him/herself or others.
3. Prior to any removal that constitutes a change in placement, the school must inform the parent/guardian that the law requires the school to consider whether or not the behavior that forms the basis of the disciplinary action is related to the student's disability. At this meeting, called a "manifestation determination," the IEP Team, including the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) shall determine if the misbehavior was caused by or had a direct relationship to the student's disability, or was the direct result of the school's failure to provide the services required by the student's IEP. In making the manifestation determination, the IEP Team must consider relevant information from the student's file, including the student's IEP, observations of the student's behavior, and any relevant information that the parent(s)/guardian(s) provide.
  - a. If the IEP Team determines that the student's behavior **was caused by** or directly related to the student's disability or the failure to properly implement the IEP, then the student must be returned to the last approved IEP placement unless the IEP Team (parent and school) decides on a different placement. The student shall also undergo a functional behavioral assessment. A functional behavioral assessment is a comprehensive assessment of behavior that provides the IEP Team with information about the student's behavior and identifies behavioral intervention services and program modifications that are designed to address the behavioral violation so it does not recur. If the student has already had a functional behavioral assessment and has a behavioral intervention plan, then the IEP Team shall determine if any changes should be made to the behavioral intervention plan. If the behavior was caused by the failure to properly implement the IEP, the school shall take immediate steps to remedy the deficiencies.
  - b. If the manifestation determination decision is that the disciplinary action **was not caused** by or directly related to the student's disability or the failure to properly implement the IEP, then the student with a disability may be disciplined in the same manner and for the same length of time as other students who are disciplined for the same offense. The IEP Team, however, must determine the interim alternative educational setting ("IAES") where the student will be placed and the educational services that will be provided. An IAES is a setting other than the student's current placement that enables the student to continue to receive educational services according to his or her IEP. School personnel may consider the student's unique circumstances in determining whether a change in placement is appropriate for a student with a disability. For students with Section 504 Plans, students are entitled to receive educational services to the same extent as their non-disabled peers. See section on School-wide Educational Services Plan. As appropriate, the team may also decide to conduct a functional behavioral assessment and provide behavioral intervention services and modifications to address the behavior so that it does not recur.
4. The school will notify the parent/guardian of the decision and provide written notice of procedural safeguards no later than the date of the start of any disciplinary action.

### **Procedures Applied to Students Not Yet Determined Eligible for Special Education**

If, prior to the disciplinary action, the school had knowledge that the student may be a student with a disability, Christa McAuliffe Charter School makes all IDEA protections available to the student until and unless the student is subsequently determined not to be eligible.

The school may be considered to have prior knowledge if:

1. The parent/guardian had expressed concern in writing and expressed that the child was in need of special education and related services; or
2. The parent/guardian had requested an evaluation; or
3. School staff had expressed concern that the student had a disability directly to the director of student services, special education coordinator, or other supervisory staff.

Exception: A school is not deemed to know that a child is a child with a disability if:

1. The parent/guardian of the child has refused to allow a child to be evaluated;
2. The parent/guardian of the child has refused special education services; or
3. The child was previously evaluated and it was determined that the child was ineligible for special education and related services.

If the school had no reason to consider the student disabled, and the parent/guardian requests an evaluation subsequent to the disciplinary action, the district will follow procedures to conduct an evaluation to determine eligibility. This evaluation must be completed in an “expedited” manner. After the evaluation is complete, a Team meeting should be held to discuss the results of the evaluation and determine eligibility for special education consistent with the IDEA. If the student is found eligible, then he/she continues to receive all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility. While all evaluations and proceedings are being completed the school must provide the child with educational services.

The School has developed procedures consistent with the federal regulations to expedite evaluations.

### **Instruction Provided to a Student Removed from School**

1. During a short disciplinary removal, the school is not required to provide instruction to a disabled student unless it does so for non-disabled students.
2. However, once a student with a disability has been removed from the school or from his/her placement for more than 10 cumulative days during the school year the student must receive educational services that will allow the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress toward the goals set out in his or her IEP. The Director of Student Services shall consult with at least one of the student’s teachers to determine what services are necessary. These services shall begin on the 11<sup>th</sup> school day of a student’s disciplinary removal during the school year and continue during the disciplinary removal.

### **Appeal Process**

If a parent/guardian disagrees with the decision regarding placement of his or her student under the disciplinary provisions or disagrees with the manifestation determination, or if the school believes that maintaining the current placement of the student is substantially likely to result in an injury to the student or to others, either the parent or school may appeal the decision by requesting a hearing with the Board of Special Education Appeals (“BSEA”).

The BSEA will convene a hearing on a disciplinary placement or manifestation determination on an expedited schedule. During the appeal of a disciplinary placement or manifestation determination, the student must remain in the IAES until the hearing officer makes a decision or the disciplinary period is completed, unless the parent and the school district agree to a different placement.

## Special Circumstances for Exclusion

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Special circumstances exist if a student: possesses, uses, sells or solicits illegal drugs on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event; carries a weapon to school or a school-sponsored event; or inflicts serious bodily harm upon another person at school or a school-sponsored event. Under these circumstances, the Director of Culture or his/her designee may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days. The student may remain in this IAES for a period of time not to exceed 45 school days. Thereafter, the student will return to the previously agreed-upon placement unless a hearing officer has ordered another placement, or parents/guardians and the school agree to another placement. For students with Section 504 Plans, there is no automatic right to receive educational services beyond the 10<sup>th</sup> school day of suspension.

School personnel will provide [Notice of Parent and Student Rights Under Section 504](#) for students with disabilities prior to any suspension exceeding 10 school days in one school year. These notices will provide an explanation of the process should there be disagreement regarding the manifestation determination or any placement decision. Parent, guardian and/or student may petition the Bureau of Special Education Appeals for a hearing or the Office of Civil Rights (Section 504). Until issues are resolved, the student remains in his or her current placement.

## Expulsion Policy & Procedures<sup>3</sup>

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When a student engages in behaviors that harm or threaten the safety and/or security of the school community, a specific process is employed to ensure a comprehensive investigation and due process.

As noted above, a crisis response protocol is employed when a behavior occurs that harms or threatens the safety of the school community. Following implementation of the protocol, parent/guardian communication is established and a safety investigation takes place with either school officials or a Framingham Police Safety Officer taking the lead. The safety investigation helps the Executive Director determine whether the disciplinary situation calls for an Expulsion Hearing.

### Expulsion Hearing

1. If the disciplinary situation indicates the need for an Expulsion Hearing, a designated school official notifies the student and parent of an initial short term suspension and that the matter is being reviewed for possible further disciplinary action, up to and including the possibility of expulsion from school.
2. For any potential expulsion, the Executive Director reviews the case with the school official who led the investigation and determines whether or not the violation(s) warrants the consideration of permanent removal of the student from the school. The Executive Director's decision of whether to hold an Expulsion Hearing will be based on the results of the investigation and also take into account:
  - a. For disciplinary action under M.G.L. c. 71, sec. 37H1/2 (felony charges and felony convictions), the Executive Director and another school official will determine whether or not the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.
  - b. For any M.G.L. c. 71, sec. 37H or 37H1/2 offenses (i.e. possession of controlled substance, weapons, assault on educational personnel, felony charge or conviction), the Executive Director is responsible for holding a hearing for expulsion from school, with the option of appeal to the Board of Trustees.
  - c. How cooperative or uncooperative the student has been during the investigation.
  - d. How well the school has informed the parent(s)/guardian(s) in previous incidents, if there have been any.
  - e. Whether the student shows remorse and is willing to take responsibility for his/her actions and engage in restorative work.
3. The decision to suspend rather than expel in serious cases (where serious case is defined as involving the possession or use of illegal substances or weapons, assault, vandalism, or violation of a student's civil rights) may depend on whether the Executive Director determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.
4. If the Executive Director determines that an Expulsion Hearing should be held, then the following procedures are followed.

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<sup>3</sup>Updated policy approved by the school's Board of Trustees on September 21, 2015.

### Procedures Prior to Expulsion Hearing

1. Upon determination that an Expulsion Hearing will be held, the Executive Director will identify a date, location, and time of the hearing. The date will be no less than ten days from any initial suspension from school. Either the Executive Director will consider the parent/guardian availability when identifying the hearing date.
  - a. The parent may ask for a date that is later than that named by the school. If a parent requests a postponement, it is understood that the student may continue to be out of school during this time.
2. The Executive Director will take all possible steps to ensure that the student and his or her parents or guardians are informed of their rights before the expulsion takes place. These steps include the following:
  - a. The Executive Director or designee will attempt to communicate with the parents/guardians either in person or by phone to explain the decision that an Expulsion Hearing will be held. The Executive Director or designee will explain the process and the rights of the student.
  - b. The Executive Director or designee will provide a written letter for the family that states the charges and summarizes the evidence, the reasons why such charges require an expulsion hearing, the date, time and location of the hearing, the expectation that a parent or guardian be present at the hearing, the right of the student to bring witnesses to the hearing, and the right of the family to have an attorney present at the hearing. The letter will either be delivered to the parent(s)/guardian(s) in person or be sent by registered mail.

### Expulsion Hearing Procedures

1. The school will ensure that a recording or transcript is made of the expulsion hearings.
2. The Executive Director will serve as the hearing officer. The school official who led the investigation will present the case to the Executive Director. The designated school official may call witnesses to speak and present other evidence as he/she deems appropriate.
3. The student will then have the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at the hearing. The student will also have the right to allow his or her parents to speak on his or her behalf. The student will also have the right to have an attorney present. Finally, the student will have the right to ask questions.
4. The student's Crew leader may be present upon the student/parent's request.
5. The school's representative and the student or his/her representative will have the opportunity to give a final statement.
6. The Executive Director, in 37H discipline hearings, will issue a written decision within three days of the formal hearing, and copies will be forwarded to the student, the parents or guardians, the student's Crew leader, the school's Board of Trustees, and the student's permanent record file. This letter will include the right to appeal to the Executive Director and outline the process for appealing the expulsion and the opportunity to receive educational services.<sup>4</sup>
7. If the student is not expelled, but there is sufficient evidence to support such a decision, the Executive Director may require an agreement with the student and family that allows the student to remain at school with certain provisions as appropriate for the particular offense, such as drug tests or the right to search randomly.
8. If the student is expelled, the school will make available educational services to the student during the period of expulsion, once it is imposed. The Executive Director or designee will inform the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) of this opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled in writing<sup>5</sup>. The school will also retain the student's records until the student leaves the school and another school requests the records.
  - a. Teachers may assign online learning assignments via Google Classroom, a shared Google folder, or other

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<sup>4</sup> The expulsion will remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing. For a 37H ½ charge, delinquency complaint, conviction, adjudication or admission of guilt, the principal may remove the student for a period of time up to expulsion if principal determines the student's continued presence would have a substantial detriment on the general welfare of the school. The student has 10 days from the date of the expulsion to notify the superintendent of an appeal.

<sup>5</sup> Written notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a specific staff member to arrange services.

online software.

- b. If the student does not have access to a computer and the internet at home, teachers will provide copies of learning assignments. The student's family is responsible for picking up learning materials from the school.
  - c. In some cases, including but not limited to those in which a student has an IEP, the school may suggest that the student be tutored after school hours by a member of faculty at the town library or other agreed upon location.
9. If the student moves to another district during the period of expulsion, the new district shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan.

### **Procedures for Appeal of an Expulsion**

An expulsion by the Executive Director pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, sec. 37H may be appealed to the Board of Trustees within 10 days from the date of expulsion. For an appeal under M.G.L. c. 71, sec. 37H1/2 the parent/student may appeal an expulsion within 5 calendar days of the effective date of expulsion.

1. Representatives from the Board of Trustees, including at least one board officer, shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within 3 days of receipt of request.
2. The Executive Director or designee will present the case to the Board of Trustees. The Executive Director may call witnesses to speak and present other evidence as he/she deems appropriate.
3. The student will then have the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at the hearing. The student will have the right to allow his or her parents to speak on his or her behalf. The student will have the right to have an attorney present. Finally, the student will have the right to ask questions. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, the right to counsel and the right to confront and cross examine witnesses presented by the school.<sup>6</sup>
4. The student's Crew leader may be present upon the student/parent's request.
5. The school's representative and the student or his/her representative will have the opportunity to give a final statement.
6. The Board of Trustees shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Executive Director, including recommending an alternative educational program for the student. The Board of Trustees shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of the school with regard to the expulsion.

## **Discrimination or Harassment**

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For information about complaints alleging discrimination or harassment, please see the school's "Harassment & Unlawful Discrimination Policy" which outlines procedures for reporting, investigating, and resolving complaints alleging harassment or discrimination. Response procedures are outlined to ensure due process paired with prompt resolution of allegations of harassment or discrimination include sex and disability discrimination.

### **Disciplinary Action**

In the event that an investigation reveals that harassment, discrimination, other unlawful conduct, or other inappropriate conduct (even if not unlawful) has occurred, further action will be taken, including but not limited to disciplinary action, such as change in schedule (student) or work assignment (employee), suspension, or expulsion (student) / termination (employee) in accordance with all relevant laws. The Framingham Police Department will be notified as needed and per the school's memorandum of understanding with the police department.

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<sup>6</sup> The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of section 37H.

## Extracurricular Activities, School Sponsored Events, and Code of Conduct/Discipline Policy

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Participation in after school activities and school-sponsored, school-related events is a privilege afforded to students who are safe and respectful members of the community, who uphold the schoolwide norms and rules. Students are expected to participate in extracurricular activities that they sign up for on each day that they are in school. If a student is not at school, he/she may not participate in extracurricular activities or other school-sponsored activities taking place that day. Similarly, if a student is removed from the community via an in or out of school suspension, he/she may not participate in extracurricular activities or school sponsored events taking place that day. If a student who is removed from the community has not yet re-entered the community through a re-entry process, then he/she may not participate in school sponsored activities, including those that take place on a weekend (e.g. 5K fun run, cross country meeting, etc).

Students are expected to follow the school rules and norms during extracurricular activities, the one exception being that students are allowed to use their cell phones in appropriate ways that do not cause harm to anyone in the community. Students not meeting following school rules and norms or who regularly do not attend extracurricular activities, may be assigned a relevant, realistic, respectful consequence by the enrichment coordinator including but not limited to: conference with student and parent(s)/guardian(s), other fix-it tasks named above, losing privilege to participate in one or more sessions, or being asked to withdraw from the program. Consequences are named by the Enrichment Coordinator who will consult with the Director of Business and Operations and Director of Culture, as needed to problem solve situations.

A student's removal from extracurricular activities and attendance at school sponsored events is not subject to the procedural requirements of Massachusetts Laws Chapter 37H ¾. The student's removal from such activities is not a suspension for the purpose of counting the school days that a student is suspended. Parents/guardians will be notified by a school official if their student is engaging in challenging or unsafe behaviors and/or if he/she needs to withdraw from the extracurricular activities.

## Periodic Review of Discipline Data by Selected Populations

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The school maintains a "discipline dashboard" in order to regularly examine trends pertaining to student suspensions. At least three times during the year, the school's Student Support Squad which includes the Director of Culture, Director of Student Services, Director of Teaching and Learning, Executive Director, Special Education Coordinator, and counselors, participates in a review of the discipline dashboard. The team reviews suspension data that is disaggregated by race and ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, English language learner status, and students with disabilities status. The team reviews the frequency of in-school suspensions, short and long-term suspensions, expulsions, and emergency removals and the impact of disciplinary actions on selected student populations. The team also determines whether it is necessary or appropriate to modify disciplinary practices due to an over-reliance on suspensions, expulsions or removals on selected student populations compared with other students.

## Massachusetts School Discipline Resources

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The following resources provide additional information related to the current school discipline laws and regulations:

1. [School Discipline Law \(August, 2012\)](#)
2. [School Discipline Regulations \(August, 2014\)](#)
3. [Discipline of Special Education Students Under IDEA 2004](#)

# Code of Character

[Portuguese Translation - click here](#) - [Spanish Translation - click here](#)

## Introduction (excerpt from the school's Discipline Policy)

It is the policy of the Christa McAuliffe Charter School (McAuliffe) to ensure fair and effective disciplinary practices. McAuliffe's Code of Character (which serves as the school's Code of Conduct) is administered within the framework of the United States Constitution and state laws and regulations with regard to due process for students. The Code of Character is administered for disciplinary infractions that occur on school grounds or in virtual classrooms or at school-sponsored events OR for disciplinary infractions that occur off school grounds but substantially disrupt the educational environment or create a hostile environment at school.

The Code of Character is based on a system of progressive discipline with a goal of limiting the use of suspension as a consequence for student misconduct until other consequences and interventions have been considered, as appropriate. Alternative consequences may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, and restorative practices. Please see the McAuliffe Family Handbook to review the school's Discipline and Expulsion Policies for more information about due process for suspensions and expulsions.

McAuliffe's Code of Character articulates expectations for students so that they know what is expected of them during all parts of the school day. Scholars are expected to follow the Code of Character in order to be safe, respectful, and productive members of the community. The Code of Character also articulates examples of unexpected behaviors categorized into three levels of severity. Each Level (1, 2, or 3) of unexpected behaviors has suggested restorative practices that can be utilized to help the scholar meet expectations again. The list of behaviors at each level are not absolute. When behaviors arise that are not listed as examples in the Code of Character, the Dean of Students or designee will use the Code of Character to classify the behavior and assign a fitting response. The school communicates with the Framingham Police Department School Resource Officer for all Level 3 behaviors and for Level 2 behaviors, as necessary. In cases of extreme unsafe behavior, the Dean of Students and/or the Executive Director may find it appropriate for an Emergency Removal of a student from the school grounds.

The Code of Character is a system that supports our philosophy, recognizing and teaching expected behavior, which strengthens relationships. Using a discipline system that strengthens relationships to improve student behavior is a belief embedded in restorative practices. According to the International Institute of Restorative Practices (IIRP) quantitative analyses show a, "Growing awareness that punishments such as detention and suspension only aggravate issues such as bullying, violence, poor academic performance" The Code of Character not only shapes lives but also provides strategies to best support our scholars during challenging moments and problem solves unexpected behavior. The Dean of Students oversees all disciplinary decisions made in response to scholar behavior, and consults with classroom teachers when scholars break the Code of Character in class or when classroom teachers witness an event in or out of their own classroom.

# 2024-25 CODE OF CHARACTER

<b>Expected Behaviors In School</b>	<b>Level 1 Unexpected Behaviors</b> Behavior that is generally managed with a brief intervention. Typically seen as not complying with a request.	<b>Level 2 Unexpected Behaviors</b> Disrespectful behavior towards another person or that is disruptive to the learning environment. Can be repeated Level 1 behaviors	<b>Level 3 Unexpected Behaviors</b> Behavior that involves safety concerns. Can be repeated Level 2 behaviors.
<b>Perseverance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Take pride in yourself &amp; work</li> <li>➤ Encourage yourself and others when faced with obstacles</li> <li>➤ Rise to the challenge by trying a different approach</li> <li>➤ Learn from your mistakes by having a growth mindset</li> <li>➤ Reach out to teachers for help when stuck</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Distracting classmate(s)</li> <li>➤ Not following class routines</li> <li>➤ Arriving late to class</li> <li>➤ Avoiding class</li> <li>➤ Leaving class without permission</li> <li>➤ Misusing hall pass (Wrong place/Wrong time)</li> <li>➤ Calling home to be dismissed without permission</li> <li>➤ Intentionally entering wrong classroom to disrupt class</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Repeated Level 1 behaviors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Theft</li> <li>➤ Possessing, using, being under the influence or distributing tobacco, drugs or alcohol</li> <li>➤ Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol in school</li> <li>➤ Possessing a weapon</li> <li>➤ Destroying school property/ equipment or personal property</li> </ul>
<b>Responsibility</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Have materials ready for each class</li> <li>➤ Focus on your work</li> <li>➤ Use an appropriate volume</li> <li>➤ Participate by listening and sharing your input</li> <li>➤ Accept redirection and move on</li> <li>➤ Engage and remain with crew during activities with crew</li> <li>➤ Appropriately identifying yourself</li> <li>➤ Appropriately use technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Unprepared for class</li> <li>➤ Calling out/interrupting class</li> <li>➤ Distracting classmate(s)</li> <li>➤ Not following class routines</li> <li>➤ Not participating in class</li> <li>➤ Not doing any homework</li> <li>➤ Not doing work during class</li> <li>➤ Talking / making noise during an emergency procedure or drill</li> <li>➤ Running in hallways</li> <li>➤ Being in staff/faculty area without permission</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Repeated Level 1 behaviors</li> <li>➤ Stealing from classmates and/or staff</li> <li>➤ Plagiarism (copying others work online or in person)</li> <li>➤ Graffiti/vandalism</li> <li>➤ Misuse of technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Physical aggression/assault/fighting (hitting, kicking, punching, etc) toward faculty or student</li> <li>➤ Verbally or physically threatening any school faculty/staff</li> <li>➤ Leaving school grounds without permission</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Listen 1st, think 2nd, speak 3rd</li> <li>➤ Encourage participation of all group members</li> <li>➤ Let all voices of a group be heard</li> <li>➤ Agree or disagree with ideas, not people</li> <li>➤ Provide assistance to others who may need help</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Not following directions from an adult</li> <li>➤ Telling the partial truth, but not the whole truth</li> <li>➤ Mocking or making fun of a classmate and/or staff</li> <li>➤ Speaking over classmate(s) (Not allowing anyone to speak)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Willfully showing disrespect/mocking (talking back, rolling eyes, etc)</li> <li>➤ Continually teasing, spreading rumors, or gossiping about other scholars (including with social media, apps, email, texting, etc)</li> <li>➤ Insubordination towards adult directions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Major/intentional invasion of personal space</li> </ul>

<b>Expected Behaviors In School</b>	<b>Level 1 Unexpected Behaviors</b>	<b>Level 2 Unexpected Behaviors</b>	<b>Level 3 Unexpected Behaviors</b>
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<p><b>Kindness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Treat others how they want to be treated</li> <li>➤ Ask for permission to use other people’s materials and be respectful while using them</li> <li>➤ Whole body listening</li> <li>➤ Honor everyone’s individuality and celebrate their successes.</li> <li>➤ Respect limits set by adults or peers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Moving seats without permission during bus-ride or during class</li> <li>➤ Walking away from an adult or ignoring a person when he/she is speaking to you.</li> <li>➤ Starting rumors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Using unsafe, offensive, or provoking language (including swearing)</li> <li>➤ Horseplaying (hands on peers)</li> <li>➤ Verbal aggression</li> <li>➤ Blatant public displays of affection (e.g. kissing, touching, etc)</li> <li>➤ Minor physical altercation (pushing/shoving, etc.)</li> <li>➤ Displaying inappropriate materials in class</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Bullying / Cyberbullying</li> <li>➤ Harassment / Sexualized Comments</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inquiry</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Lead with curiosity</li> <li>➤ Ask relevant questions to push the discussion further</li> <li>➤ Learn more about others’ perspectives by asking questions</li> <li>➤ Take time to self reflect</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Becoming judgemental; comments without asking positive questions</li> <li>➤ Asking off topic questions</li> <li>➤ Refusing to take ownership for mistakes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Continually trying to ask off-topic questions to disrupt class and learning of others.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Inciting chaos that disrupts the school community</li> <li>➤ Violating civil rights (racist comments, religious insensitive comments, etc.)</li> </ul>

**Continuum of Behaviors and Responses**

Students will sometimes make poor choices. In the event that they do make a poor choice a consequence can be used. The core message you send by using consequences is that you believe that all your students are lifelong learners and poor choices are just another opportunity they can learn and grow from.

<p><b>CONSEQUENCES/RESTORATIVE PRACTICES for unexpected behaviors (broken down by each level of behavior)</b></p>		
<p><b>Level 1 Unexpected Behavior (assigned by Educator)</b></p>	<p><b>Level 2 Unexpected Behavior (assigned by Dean or Educator)</b></p>	<p><b>Level 3 Unexpected Behavior (assigned by Dean of Students or designee)</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Positive narration to other students that are on task.</li> <li>● Re-stating classroom expectations to the entire class.</li> <li>● Verbal, non-verbal prompts regarding behavior</li> <li>● Private individual correction</li> <li>● Student has a conversation with a teacher/staff.</li> <li>● Notify parent/ guardian of behavior via phone, email, or face to face.</li> <li>● Temporary seat change</li> <li>● Written reflection</li> <li>● Task to complete to give back to the group or setting that was impacted by the behavior</li> <li>● Referral to counselor/Student Support Staff</li> <li>● Meeting using Collaborative Problem Solving</li> </ul>	<p>EDUCATOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consequences (lunch/recess or before/after school). Notify parents and schedule consequences if before or after school.</li> <li>● Permanent seat change</li> <li>● Referral slip to Dean</li> <li>● Removal for one period to work in separate space: followed up by contacting parents and Dean. Also meet with student for restorative conversation</li> </ul> <p>EDUCATOR &amp; DEAN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Give back to the community - beautify community spaces.</li> <li>● Assign <a href="#">Fix It Plan</a></li> <li>● A class-wide restorative circle or a smaller restorative circle with a few scholars, family, and support staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In or out of school suspension and/or possible expulsion depending on the nature of the behavior.</li> <li>● Meeting or phone call with parents and Dean of Students day of incident</li> <li>● School community service assigned</li> <li>● Following a Level 2 or 3 behavior, a more formal <a href="#">Fix It Plan</a> is often developed.</li> <li>● Re-entry meeting with guardian upon return to school</li> <li>● Meeting with school resource officer</li> <li>● Safety/Behavioral contract signed</li> <li>● Restorative work/education assigned to build understanding and skills to avoid poor choices</li> <li>● Removal from bus or bus change</li> <li>● Class change</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher meeting with student and parent/guardian.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Teacher can use discretion when assigning any other Level 1 consequences)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support meeting with parent/Guardian</li> <li>Verbal or written apology to an individual or to the crew or class</li> </ul> <p>DEAN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Possible after school consequence or suspension assigned by the Dean or designee if the behavior has been repeated.</li> <li>A behavioral contract in which the student helps create the contract, giving the student ownership of future consequences to his behavior.</li> <li>Removal from class until restorative conference or fix-it plan is completed</li> </ul> <p><i>(in case scholar does not comply with consequence assigned by educator, Dean of Students will assist in matter)</i></p>	
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## Search and Seizure Policy & Procedures

[Overview](#)

[Reasonableness](#)

[Scope of Search](#)

[Warrant Requirement](#)

### Overview

Consistent with constitutional principles, school officials may legally search a student and their belongings and seize any objects that violate school rules or laws or compromise the safety of the school environment for the school community. Searches are appropriate when school officials have a “reasonable suspicion” that the student has violated school rules or otherwise broken the law. Searches conducted by the school administration must be justified at inception and reasonable in scope.

Searches and seizures will be conducted for the safety and well being of the students and adults in the Christa McAuliffe Charter School. School cubbies and desks are the property of the school, and students should, therefore, have no expectation of privacy in these areas.

In order for school staff to conduct a search of a student's person, locker, or possessions, including cell phones, there must be a reasonable suspicion that the student has violated school policy or engaged in illegal activity. A student's personal belongings are subject to search if the administration has reasonable suspicion to believe that contraband, illegal substance/material, or stolen goods are present. While there is no exact definition of “reasonable suspicion”, a

student or staff report of student misconduct, observations by the administrator him/herself, or discovery of other independent evidence that suggests a violation of school rules or laws can give rise to reasonable suspicion in support of a search. Each situation is unique and handled on a case-by-case basis.

If searches are conducted, the school will ensure that the privacy of the students is respected to the extent possible and that student and family are informed of the circumstances surrounding and results of the search.

### **Reasonableness**

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The Executive Director or designee will ask the student for consent to the search of the student and/or their belongings (pockets, backpack, shoes, cell phone, etc). When obtaining consent to search a cell phone, a school official will ask the student to turn any passcode/password protection setting off and turn the phone into airplane mode. The scope of the search will be limited to what was intended by the consent given.

If the student refuses to give consent to search and seizure, school officials may seize and/or search the student's belongings on school grounds without first getting a warrant if there is reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating the law or the school's discipline policy.

The search must be justified at its inception, reasonable in scope, and sufficient probability (versus absolute certainty). When determining whether the information is sufficient to create reasonable suspicion, school officials will consider the source and the factual basis for the information provided. The school will distinguish as best as possible between fact and rumor.

Note: Violation of the school's policy that prohibits the use of cellphones in school, justifies the school's confiscation of the phone, however, does not justify a subsequent search through the phone.

### **Scope of Search**

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The scope of the search must be tailored to the nature of the infraction and related to the objectives of the search. A search will be conducted by two school employees, typically the Dean of Students or Culture & Character Coach(or designee) and a school counselor to ensure the school's procedures are followed. In the case that a search discovers an illegal substance or weapon the Dean of Students, Culture & Character Coach or designee will promptly notify the School Resource Officer.

In regards to cell phone searches, the search should be narrowed to the places on the phone where evidence of criminal activity, breaking school rules, or potential harm to anyone in the school would reasonably be located. In other words, if an official is looking for evidence of "sexting" or distribution of explicit images they should limit the search on the phone to places where any messages and/or pictures could reasonably be stored/exchanged. In the case that a search discovers a picture which could reasonably qualify as child pornography, the Dean of Students, Culture & Character Coach, or designee will promptly notify the School Resource Officer.

### **Warrant Requirement**

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When the Dean of Students, Culture & Character Coach or designee is unsure of whether the search and seizure can be justified under the reasonableness standard, he/she should contact the School Resource Officer to discuss whether to obtain a warrant.

# Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Summary of Policy & Procedures<sup>7</sup>

[General Information](#)

[Interventions and Alternative Methods](#)

[De-Escalation Guidelines and Alternatives to Physical Restraints](#)

[De-Escalation and Physical Restraint Training](#)

[Additional Information](#)

## General Information

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The Christa McAuliffe Charter School seeks to promote a safe and productive workplace and educational environment for its employees and students. In accordance with the Code of Massachusetts Regulations (603 C.M.R. 46.00), the law governing the use of physical restraint on students in public schools, McAuliffe seeks to ensure that every student in McAuliffe is free from the unreasonable use of physical restraint.

## Interventions and Alternative Methods

There are a variety of appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention. These alternative methods should be used first when seeking to prevent student violence, self-injurious behavior, suicide, and/or de-escalating potentially dangerous behavior occurring among groups of students or with an individual student. Physical restraints only should be used in emergency situations after these other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate.

## De-Escalation Guidelines and Alternatives to Physical Restraints

General guidelines for de-escalating potentially dangerous behavior occurring among groups of students or with an individual student include the following:

- a. **Remain Calm** - To possibly help prevent the likelihood of a student experiencing distress from escalating his/her behavior use a neutral and level tone of voice, control one's facial expressions and use a supportive non-threatening body language.
- b. **Obtain Assistance** – Whenever possible, school personnel should immediately take steps to notify school administrators, the school's administrative response team and/or other school personnel of a potentially dangerous situation and to obtain additional assistance.
- c. **One Person Speaks** - In order to minimize the likelihood of confusion and/or the likelihood of a student experiencing distress from escalating his/her behavior, having one person providing overall direction to the response and the follow up procedures is advisable. This often may be either the first trained staff person on the scene or the staff person with the most information about the particular situation.
- d. **Remove Student If Possible** – The feasibility of having a student experiencing distress leave an area with other students and move to another more private and safe area in order to de-escalate should be considered.
- e. **Remove Other Students** – If it is not feasible to have a student experiencing distress move to a more private and safe area in order to de-escalate, consider the feasibility of having other staff assist and monitor the removal of other students to another area within the school until the student de-escalates.

## De-Escalation and Physical Restraint Training

Within the first month of each school year, the Director of Student Services or designee provides all program staff with training on McAuliffe Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy and Procedures. Additionally, for all new school employees that are hired after the start of the school year, the Director of Student Services shall within the first month of

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<sup>7</sup> This is a summary of the school's Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy and Procedures. To view the full policy and procedures, [click here](#).

their employment provide the new employees with training on the Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy and Procedures.

At the beginning of each school year, the Director of Student Services, in collaboration with the Dean of Students, also identifies program staff who are authorized to serve as a school-wide resource to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. These teachers, leaders, and support staff will participate in in-depth training in the use of physical restraint. The DESE recommends that the training be competency-based and be of at least-sixteen (16) hours in length with refresher training occurring annually thereafter.

School personnel shall only use a physical restraint with two goals in mind:

- a. to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm; and
- b. To prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint.

Further, nothing in the Code of Massachusetts Regulations (603 C.M.R. 46.00) or McAuliffe Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy and Procedures shall be construed to limit the protection afforded to publicly funded students under other federal and state laws, including those laws that provide for the rights of students who have been found eligible to receive special education services. Additionally, nothing in the Code of Massachusetts Regulations (603 C.M.R.46.00) or McAuliffe Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy and Procedures does not preclude any teacher, employee or agent of a public education program from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

### **Additional Information**

To learn more about the policy and procedure, [click here](#) to read the full text. If you have questions or would like to engage in discussion about the school's policy and procedures pertaining to restraint prevention and behavior support policy and procedures, please contact our Director of Student Services, Michelle Arons, at [marons@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:marons@mcauliffecharter.org).

## **Dress Code**

### **Dress Code Guidelines**

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**Having a dress code promotes a more serious school atmosphere that emphasizes academics and promotes positive behavior. McAuliffe's dress code will promote individuality, and self-expression, along with teaching students the importance of a respectable appearance which is a lesson that will positively impact their self-respect and self-esteem.**

Students should arrive at school in clothing that will allow them to flourish not only in a high functioning learning environment but also as an individual. A student's presentation (including clothing, shoes, accessories, and cleanliness) may not disrupt the learning of others or threaten the safety and health of the community.

Scholars are not allowed to wear clothing or other apparel that may take away from their ability to focus or may threaten the safety and health of the community. This includes wearing items that promote products illegal for use by minors or clothing displaying obscene material, profanity, or reference to prohibited conduct. The Dean of Students or designee may determine what constitutes "inappropriate/disruptive" to a learning environment. [M.G.L. Chapter 72 Sections 82-83](#)

When a student's appearance or mode of dress hinders the individual's educational process or constitutes a threat to health or safety, the student will be asked to modify his/her attire or speak to the Dean of Students. While examples are named below, modifications may also need to be made to items that are not listed.

- Hygiene concerns (clean clothing, brush, deodorant, showering, etc (when you look good, you feel good). Dean or designee will contact parents to provide support if washing clothes is an issue.
- Sheer, see-through clothing may not be worn unless you wear clothing underneath or over.
- If wearing a hat or hood, your face must be visible at all times.

- You may not wear any item that may be a hazard to safety or may damage school property.
- You may not wear items that advertise or promote drugs, alcohol, tobacco, gang activity, violence, or illegal activity.
- You may not wear items that are sexually suggestive or that have lewd, profane, or obscene language or images.
- You may not wear clothing or accessories that may be a hazard, damage school property, or harm self or others (e.g., billfold chains, spiked wristbands, cleats, steel-tipped shoes, jewelry with razor blades).

## Dress Code Interventions

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If a student needs support following dress code guidelines, that student's crew leader, grade level counselor or a school leader will have a conversation with the student in private. The primary focus will be on adjusting or modifying the clothing so that the student's outfit meets the dress code but still allowing the student to feel comfortable and valued. The school nurse can assist with suggesting clothing modifications. Adjusting/modifying clothing can include, but is not limited to, turning a shirt inside out, changing clothing or having a parent/guardian bring clothing, wearing a belt, etc. The adult will make efforts to not pass judgment on the student's character for their choice of clothing and will not be shamed. Whomever is assisting with the modification should always reach out to parents for appropriate reasons:

1. The parent should always be aware of any clothing changes regarding their child(ren)
2. We may offer assistance if a family is struggling to meet the dress code expectations.
3. Parents should be aware of what their child(ren) are wearing before leaving for school.

When a student's attire does not follow the guidelines named above or if attire is inappropriate in a way not addressed above, the school will respond in the following way:

- **First Incident:** Student conference and modification of clothing.
  1. Counselor or other staff finds out the reason for the chosen attire (with empathy).
  2. Hopefully it's a quick fix (replace the item with a clean and/or appropriate item - see nurse, turn inside out).
  3. Log incident as first offense
- **Repeated Incidents:** Student conference, modification of clothing, and parent/guardian contact; parent/guardian conference as needed
  1. Referral to Dean to deal with matter
  2. Find out the reason for the chosen attire (with empathy)
  3. The families will be contacted.
  4. Scholars may receive consequences with Dean or designee.
  5. Provide resources for parents struggling with providing clothing i.e clean socks, t-shirts etc...

## Dressing for the Occasion

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### Fieldwork Attire

- Wear comfortable clothes that cover your body and allow for a lot of movement.
- Dress for the weather. If it is going to be cold, dress in layers and avoid cotton. If it will be rainy, bring a waterproof jacket and extra undergarments to stay dry.
- Wear sneakers or comfortable boots. Do not wear open toed shoes, sandals, or flip-flops.
- For overnight fieldwork, teachers will send home a packing list to provide further guidance.

### Evening Performance Attire

- Dress more "professionally" than on a typical school day
- Dress for Success!
- Wear nice jeans, khakis, skirts, or dresses along with collared shirts, blouses, or solid color t-shirts.
- Please leave hats, shirts with logos and other types on them, tripp-pants, torn clothing, and "hoodies" at home.

# Technology Acceptable Use Policy

## Summary

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Scholars are expected to use the Chromebook and Internet for educational purposes. Scholars using the Chromebook and Internet for purposes not approved by teachers or staff could face disciplinary action including loss of computer privileges while at school. Alternative discipline action will be considered when dealing with remote learning which requires computer access. McAuliffe has installed the federally-required Internet filter and firewall to prevent access to inappropriate sites and to protect our scholars from outside interference.

## Guidelines for Technology Use & McAuliffe Accounts (Acceptable Use Policy)

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### Educational Technology

McAuliffe provides scholars access to educational technology tools both at school and at home. At school, this includes Internet access in classrooms, access to laptops, and McAuliffe Accounts (“account”). These accounts are also accessible at home, and on any device, anywhere in the world. The purpose of these tools is to support learning by providing scholars and teachers with access to resources and an opportunity for collaborative work. All uses of McAuliffe technology must be in support of and consistent with educational objectives. All scholars who use McAuliffe’s technology resources are expected to read these Guidelines and/or to take part in a discussion of the Guidelines with a teacher and/or Crew leader. Adherence to the Guidelines is a condition for a scholar's privilege of access and use of technology and accounts.

### Scholars’ Responsibility

All scholars’ use of the McAuliffe Internet or Chromebook is to be conducted under faculty supervision. Nevertheless, faculty members are not expected to monitor use at every moment. Each scholar is expected to take individual responsibility for his or her use of the Chromebook, Internet and McAuliffe accounts - while accessing them at school, at home or on a mobile device.

### Access and Suspension of Access

Internet and email through the McAuliffe system is a privilege. A scholar's access may be suspended for a designated period of time or indefinitely if a scholar does not follow the school’s technology expectations. If a scholar’s access is suspended or canceled, alternative non-digital materials will be provided to the scholar for the duration of the suspension/cancellation. Inappropriate conduct on the McAuliffe system will also be subject to disciplinary action, in conformity with the school’s Code of Character and Discipline Policy.

### Personal Safety

The Internet is accessible to the public. Unfortunately, this includes people who want to make contact with scholars for inappropriate purposes or under false pretenses. McAuliffe cannot screen the Internet for such inappropriate uses. Therefore, scholars must be cautious and prudent about supplying personal information and arranging personal meetings. In particular, scholars should never arrange a personal meeting with a person who was met online without their parents’ or guardians’ knowledge and approval. Scholars should promptly inform their Crew leader, teacher, or school administrator of any online communication that the scholar feels is threatening, harassing, or otherwise inappropriate.

### Use of Proxy

The use of Proxies, Virtual Private Networking (VPN), Caching Servers, or any other means to avoid restrictions placed on the IT network and/or internet access is expressly prohibited on the McAuliffe network on or any McAuliffe device.

**No Expectation of Privacy**

Scholars are reminded to assume no expectation of privacy while using technology at school, or when using online tools provided through a McAuliffe Account (on any device, anywhere in the world). McAuliffe reserves the right to monitor or review any information stored or transmitted on its equipment, network, or servers. Furthermore, McAuliffe has the right to disclose all electronic communications, including email and Internet access, to school administration and law enforcement officers, if warranted. Lastly, McAuliffe may retain records, including emails, electronic documents, etcetera, for a number of years after graduation--some of these records may be retained as part of the official scholarly record.

**Consequence Structure for Unexpected Technology Behaviors**

See below for the general consequence structures for unexpected behaviors around technology use at McAuliffe. For a full understanding of scholar responsibilities around technology use at McAuliffe, please see the [Scholar Responsible Use Policy](#) linked to here.

Expected Behavior	Unexpected Behavior	Warning/Reteach	Minor	Major
Scholars will use devices when directed to by their teacher and will use the device in ways that enhance their learning.	<b>Refusal to follow directions including but not limited to:</b> on computer without permission; off-task computer use; on websites without permission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Warning<sup>8</sup></li> <li>- Possible call/notify home</li> <li>- Possible teacher consequence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teacher consequence, likely during lunch/recess</li> <li>- Possible restriction technology privileges</li> <li>- Call/notify home</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teacher consequence, before/after school</li> <li>- Restriction of technology privileges</li> <li>- Parent/guardian conference</li> </ul>
Scholars will use devices - McAuliffe-issued and personal devices - with care. Scholar actions will not put devices at risk of damage.	<b>Reckless/damaging care of laptop/accessories including but not limited to:</b> eating/drinking near Chromebooks; defacing Chromebooks; vandalizing Chromebooks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Warning</li> <li>- Possible call/notify home</li> <li>- Possible teacher consequence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teacher consequence, likely during lunch/recess</li> <li>- Possible restriction technology privileges</li> <li>- Call/notify home</li> <li>- Reimbursement or community service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Before/after school consequence(s) and possibility of suspension</li> <li>- Restriction of technology privileges</li> <li>- Parent/guardian conference</li> <li>- Reimbursement or community service</li> <li>- Possible police notification</li> </ul>
Scholars will practice good digital citizenship whenever interacting online, both in and out of school. Scholars will follow the <a href="#">Scholar Responsible Use Policy</a> .	<b>Violation of acceptable use policy including but not limited to:</b> posting private or personal information about another person; accessing or transmitting obscene or pornographic material; engaging in bullying or harassment; posting chain letter or engaging in "spamming;" accessing an employee's device or account	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Warning</li> <li>- Possible call/notify home</li> <li>- Possible teacher consequence</li> <li>- Possible restriction/removal of technology privileges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teacher consequence, likely during lunch/recess</li> <li>- Possible restriction technology privileges</li> <li>- Parent/guardian conference</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Before/after school consequence(s) and possibility of suspension,</li> <li>- Restriction of technology privileges</li> <li>- Parent/guardian conference</li> <li>- Loss of school privileges</li> <li>- Possible police notification</li> </ul>

<sup>8</sup> Warning includes conversation with the professional about expected behavior paired with a warning of possible consequences should behavior continue.

## Personal Electronic Devices

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McAuliffe educators understand the value of electronic devices as a communication tool. Educators also recognize how social media apps can distort, amplify, and encourage unkind behavior, including harassment and bullying that is forbidden by law. Cell phone use is often distracting both to users and to those around them – a serious challenge for an EL Ed school built on teamwork.

We recommend that scholars leave all valuables and devices at home. The school will not be held responsible for any electronic equipment that goes missing before, during, or after a school day.

In the event that a device goes missing or is broken, we are not able to take on the investigative work necessary to find or advocate for replacement. We take all incidents of theft or vandalism seriously but cannot guarantee that we will be able to solve all the cases that come up. The school cannot be held liable for items that go missing or are broken.

Depending on the situation, the School Resource Officer may be alerted of the incident.

## Personal Smart/Cell Phones

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Please refer to the following Yondr pouch link to read about Christa McAuliffe Yondr Pouch/Cell phone policy.

[Yondr Pouch](#)

We understand that scholars may need to call home during the school day or that parents may need to get in touch with their children. Please send those calls through the main office. Please wait to call your child on their cell phone or text your child immediately after school. If a scholar is sick enough to go home, parents/guardians should expect a call from the nurse or, as appropriate, another staff member.

Scholars who need to make phone calls should ask a teacher for permission to go to the front desk, where the receptionist will help them use the school phone. While we are happy to accommodate emergency phone calls, please make a habit of communicating the day's plans with your children before school. You may also make an arrangement with your child to use the Main Office phone or their cell phones at the end of the day.

Scholars may use their cell phones (within the boundaries of the school's Code of Conduct) before 8:00am and after 2:30 pm unless they are in an enrichment class, athletic sport, or other activity in which the instructor or coach requires that electronic devices not be used.

From 8:00am-2:30pm, personal smart/cell phones must be turned off and stored in their Yondr pouches and placed in the scholar's bag or backpack.

In rare cases, scholars may be given permission by a McAuliffe professional to use their phone for a specific reason. Scholars must receive permission before taking out and using their device, and they must return their device to their Yondr pouches and back in their backpack within a certain time frame.

Smartwatches or other devices that are synced with a scholar's smartphone (or have their own independent cellular connection) should not be used for texting, emailing, or other communication purposes during the school day. If a scholar's smartwatch becomes a distraction, a faculty/staff member may ask the scholar to store the watch in their Yondr pouches for the remainder of the day.

## Response to cell phone use

If a scholar takes out or uses their personal device of any kind during the school day without permission from faculty/staff, that professional may take the phone/device from the scholar to retrieve at the end of the day. One warning will be given to put the device away. At that point, if the behavior continues, then faculty/staff will likely take away the device either for the remainder of the class or for the remainder of the day.

- If the behavior happens again for a second day, the McAuliffe professional will likely take away the device and a parent/guardian may be required to retrieve it.
- A violation of this policy for a third day will result in an after school consequence, notification to the Dean of Students, and mandated call to parents/guardians.
- If a scholar violates this policy for a fourth day, or refuses to show up for the after-school consequence, they will likely face higher consequences including suspension.

If, by the policy above, a faculty/staff member requests a scholar's personal device and the scholar refuses to relinquish it, then they will be assigned an after school consequence and the Dean of Students and parent/guardian will be notified. Refusal to relinquish their personal device for a second day will likely result in higher consequences including suspension.

### **Restrooms**

Scholars should not use their phones in the restroom. Privacy is of utmost importance in restrooms. If a staff member sees a phone in use in the restroom, no warning is required in order for it to be confiscated.

### **Earbuds/Headphones**

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It is helpful for each scholar to have their own pair of earbuds/headphones to use, as needed, to support their participation in learning activities. Scholars may not wear earbuds/headphones during school hours (8:00am - 2:30pm) except with explicit teacher permission in cases such as the following:

- Scholars may be guided to wear earbuds/headphones to listen to the audio of a video playing on a school device (e.g., Chromebook)
- During independent work time, a teacher may permit scholars to listen to music on a school device (e.g., Chromebook)
- As an accommodation, earbuds/headphones may be worn to block out surrounding noise and activity; in this case, earbuds/headphones are not typically connected to a device

In any one of these cases, teachers will monitor scholar engagement with the learning activity or productivity with independent work. If the teacher determines a scholar is not being productive, they may determine that a scholar should not wear earbuds/headphones to listen to music due to the negative impact on learning.

Scholars may not wear earbuds/headphones when walking in hallways or participating in lunch or recess, whether or not they are connected to a device. The wearing of earbuds/headphones can prevent scholars from fully engaging in the learning and interacting essential for middle school, and therefore this will be monitored by faculty/staff.

## **Scholar Responsible Use Expectations**

Our online selves are an extension of who we are and who we hope to be. As part of your education here at McAuliffe, you will be creating, sharing, and interacting online, with teachers, fellow students, and the wider world. It is important that you represent yourself and the McAuliffe community the best that you can through your online actions. While a student at McAuliffe, your online actions are held to the following standards:

### **I am responsible for practicing positive digital citizenship.**

- I will be honest and appropriate in my behavior and contributions on websites, social media, discussion boards, media sharing sites, and all other electronic communications.

- I understand that what I do and post online must not disrupt school activities or compromise school safety.

**I am responsible for keeping personal information private.**

- I will not share online personal information about myself or others outside of the McAuliffe network, including, but not limited to, names, home addresses, telephone numbers, birth dates, or visuals such as pictures, videos, and drawings, unless my teacher has given me permission to do so.
- I will be aware of the privacy settings on websites that I visit.
- I will abide by all laws, this Responsible Use Policy and all McAuliffe security policies.

**I am responsible for my passwords and my actions when using McAuliffe accounts.**

- I will not share any school usernames and passwords with anyone.
- I will not access the account information of others (students and faculty), for example, I won't log into someone else's account or use a computer that is logged into someone else's account.
- I will log out of unattended equipment and accounts in order to maintain privacy and security.

**I am responsible for treating others with respect and dignity.**

- I will not send and/or distribute hateful, discriminatory, or harassing digital communications, or engage in sexting.
- I understand that bullying in any form, including cyber bullying, is unacceptable and not tolerated at McAuliffe.
- I will not copy the work of another person and represent it as my own; I will properly cite all sources.

**I am responsible for accessing only educational content when using McAuliffe technology.**

- I will not seek out, display, or circulate material that is hate speech, sexually explicit, or violent. I understand that any exceptions must be approved by a teacher or administrator as part of a school assignment.
- I will only access appropriate and approved online games when my teacher has given me permission to do so.
- I understand that the use of the McAuliffe network for illegal or commercial purposes is strictly forbidden.

**I am responsible for respecting and maintaining the security of McAuliffe digital resources and networks.**

- I will not try to get around security settings and filters, including through the use of proxy servers to access websites blocked by McAuliffe.
- I will not install or use illegal software or files, including copyright protected materials, unauthorized software, or apps on any McAuliffe computers, tablets, smartphones, or other internet devices.
- I understand that McAuliffe chromebooks should only be connected to McAuliffe internet when in school. It is acceptable to use personal wifi when using chromebook at home, not in school.
- When using a McAuliffe chromebook you need to be logged in using your McAuliffe scholar account whether in home or in school
- I will not use the McAuliffe network or equipment to obtain unauthorized information, attempt to access information protected by privacy laws, or impersonate other users.

**I am responsible for taking all reasonable care when handling McAuliffe devices/equipment.**

- I understand that if I cause any damage to a device/equipment, I am responsible for reporting it and taking responsibility.
- I understand that vandalism and theft are prohibited; I will report any known or suspected act of vandalism or theft.

**I am responsible for the data I create and for protecting it.**

- I understand that McAuliffe provides me with a Google account to save and store all my data and files. I understand it is my responsibility to store documents and files that I need in my Google Drive.
- I understand I should not save or store personal data or files on any device.
- I understand that the school may update computers at any time to keep the equipment in working order; this may delete files saved to the device itself.

**No Expectation of Privacy**

McAuliffe uses technology protection measures to block or filter access, as much as reasonably possible, to visual and written depictions that are obscene, pornographic, or harmful to minors over the network. McAuliffe can and will monitor scholars' online activities and access, review, copy, and store or delete any communications or files and share them with adults as necessary. Scholars should have no expectation of privacy regarding their use of McAuliffe equipment, network, and/or Internet access or files, including email. Email accounts issued to scholars are archived to ensure student safety.

**Consequences for Irresponsible Use**

Misuse of McAuliffe technologies may result in consequences including by not limited to restricted or suspended access. Failure to uphold the responsibilities listed above is misuse. Such misuse may also lead to disciplinary and/or legal action against scholars, including suspension, expulsion, or criminal prosecution by government authorities. McAuliffe will tailor any disciplinary action to the specific issues related to each violation.

Disciplinary action may also be taken when a scholar intentionally directs at the school online speech that is understood by school officials to threaten, harass and intimidate a staff member or fellow scholar, even when such online action originated, and was disseminated, off-campus without the use of school resources.

**Harassment, Sexual Harassment, & Unlawful Discrimination**

**Policy Statement**

It is the policy of the school's Board of Trustees to maintain a school environment free of harassment and of discriminatory actions based on race, color, sex, age, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, sex, disability, or homelessness. Harassment by school employees, students, vendors and other individuals at school or at school-sponsored events is unlawful and is strictly prohibited. Christa McAuliffe Charter School requires all employees and students to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect to their fellow employees, students and all members of the school community.

**Nondiscrimination Statement**

The school does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs and activities, on the basis of race, color or national origin, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI); on the basis of sex, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; on the basis of disability, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title B of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); or on the basis of age, in accordance with the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1974 (ADEA); as well as the basis of gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or homelessness.

No person shall be discriminated against to Christa McAuliffe Charter School on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, homelessness, age, creed, ethnicity, ancestry, athletic performance, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement, as-required by M.G.L.c.71, §89(1); 603 CMR 1.06(1). Finally, no person shall be discriminated against in obtaining the advantages, privileges or access to the courses of study offered by Christa McAuliffe Charter School on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness as required by M.G.L. c. 76, § 5.

## Definitions

### Sexual Harassment

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Sexual harassment is a form of gender discrimination that is illegal under both federal and Massachusetts state law, including Title II, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX section 504, Massachusetts General Laws chapter 151B, § 4 and Massachusetts General Laws chapter 214, § 1C. Under these laws, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- Submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or education, or a basis for employment or educational decisions affecting the individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or education, or creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive work or learning environment.

### Conduct Which May Constitute Unlawful Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment does not refer to behavior or occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature. It refers to behavior that is not welcome and occurs in a variety of situations which share a common element: the inappropriate introduction of sexual activities or comments into the work or school environment.

Sexual harassment often involves relationships of unequal power. Such situations may contain elements of coercion, such as when compliance with requests for sexual favors becomes a condition for granting privileges or favorable treatment on the job or in the classroom. However, sexual harassment may also involve relationships among persons of equal authority or power, such as when repeated advances or demeaning verbal comments by a co worker towards another co worker have a harmful effect on a person's ability to perform his or her work. Sexual harassment can involve behavior directed at employees, students, contractors or vendors involved at McAuliffe. Depending on the circumstances, sexual harassment or unlawful discrimination may also involve conduct that is directed at one person, but that adversely affects the work or school environment of others.

Depending upon the circumstances, examples of sexual harassment could include conduct such as the following:

- repeated and unwanted sexual flirtations, advances or propositions which are offensive;
- verbal abuse or innuendo of a sexual nature which is continued or repeated;
- physical contact such as touching, patting or pinching which is uninvited and unwanted by the other person;
- offensive comments of a sexual nature about an individual's body, or sexual terms used to describe an individual;
- an open display of sexually-suggestive objects or pictures;
- jokes or remarks of a sexual nature;
- unwanted, prolonged and apparent staring or leering at a person;
- obscene gestures or suggestive or insulting sounds made towards people;
- the demand for sexual favors accompanied by an implied or overt threat concerning an individual's employment or educational status or promises of preferential treatment;

- indecent exposure;
- romantic involvement between supervisors and subordinates that is known to others in the workplace and which impacts the workplace in areas such as assignments, advancements or benefits.\*

\*The relationship between staff members and students is inherently unequal. Sexual relations between staff members and students are prohibited under any circumstances.

## Unlawful Discrimination

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Treating an employee or student differently in the terms or conditions of his or her employment or education on the basis of the employee's or student's race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness constitutes unlawful discrimination. Unlawful discrimination is strictly prohibited at McAuliffe.

### Conduct Which May Constitute Unlawful Discrimination

Depending upon the circumstances, examples of unlawful discrimination could include the above-referenced examples concerning sexual harassment, as well as the following types of conduct:

- verbal abuse or innuendo, which is continued or repeated, concerning a person's race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness;
- an open display of objects or pictures that are offensive to persons of a particular race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness;
- use of derogatory words to describe an individual's race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness;
- making decisions about an employee's employment or education based upon his or her race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness.

## Employee and Student Responsibilities

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### Harassment

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In general, harassment includes communications such as jokes, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or other conduct that offends or shows disrespect to others based upon race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness.

By law, what constitutes harassment is determined from the perspective of a reasonable person with the characteristic on which the harassment is based. What one person may consider acceptable behavior may reasonably be viewed as harassment by another person. Therefore, individuals should consider how their words and actions might reasonably be viewed by other individuals. It is also important for individuals to make it clear to others when a particular behavior or communication is unwelcome, intimidating, hostile or offensive.

### Sexual Harassment

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While all types of harassment are prohibited, sexual harassment requires particular attention. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Acceptance of or submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or education.
2. The individual's response to such conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting an employee or as a basis for educational, disciplinary, or other decisions affecting a student.
3. Such conduct interferes with an individual's job duties, education or participation in extracurricular activities.
4. The conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or school environment.

Harassment in any form or for any reason is absolutely forbidden. This includes harassment by teachers, administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors and other individuals in school or at school related events. In addition, retaliation against any individual who has brought harassment or other inappropriate behavior to the attention of the school or who has cooperated in an investigation of a complaint under this policy is unlawful and will not be tolerated by Christa McAuliffe Charter School.

Harassment and retaliation are prohibited. Persons who engage in harassment or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to reprimand, suspension, termination/expulsion or other sanctions as determined by the school administration and/or Board of Trustees, subject to applicable procedural requirements.

## **Bullying and Cyberbullying**

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Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, Section 37H and 37O, bullying and cyberbullying are prohibited and may result in disciplinary action. Please see Christa McAuliffe Charter School's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy for more information.

## **Hazing**

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Hazing shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Hazing is against the law and is punishable by fine and/or imprisonment ([M.G.L. c. 269, Section 17](#)). In other words, no one is allowed to tell anyone else that he or she can only join a group after doing something dangerous, illegal, or against school rules. Hazing is a crime. Students who experience hazing or know that someone else is experiencing it should tell an adult immediately.

## **Sexual Harassment & Unlawful Discrimination**

Each employee and student of McAuliffe is personally responsible for ensuring that his or her conduct does not sexually harass or unlawfully discriminate against anyone in the workplace or school environment. Each employee and student is responsible for cooperating in any investigation of alleged discrimination or sexual harassment if asked to do so by the person conducting the investigation.

## **Discrimination & School Nutrition**

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: [USDA Discrimination Complaint Form](#), from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail:  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

2. fax:  
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email:  
[program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

For information on McAuliffe's inclusive meal modification policy, please see Nutrition, Breakfast, Lunch & Snack section of this handbook.

## Grievance Procedures

### Grievance Procedures for Addressing Complaints of Sexual Harassment and Unlawful Discrimination

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Individuals who believe that they have been sexually harassed, or that they have been a victim of discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness should follow the complaint procedures described in this policy.

#### Informal Resolution

If an individual believes that he or she has been sexually harassed or subjected to unlawful discrimination, the first step should be to stop the offensive conduct. This can sometimes be accomplished by confronting whoever is doing the harassing, telling the person what is offensive and requesting that the person stop. If this process does not work, or if the offender is the employee's supervisor or teacher, or if for any other reason such an approach is not practical or acceptable for the employee or student, then it may be necessary to pursue a formal complaint.

#### Formal Procedure

1. A person who believes that he or she has been the victim of sexual harassment or unlawful discrimination should contact his or her school leader, supervisor, teacher, counselor, crew leader or one of the investigators listed below. School leaders, supervisors, teachers, crew leaders, and counselors are instructed to promptly bring the matter to the attention of one of the investigators listed below:

John Ermilio  
Director of Business & HR  
508-879-9000x616  
[jermilio@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:jermilio@mcauliffecharter.org)

Tony Fratantonio  
Director of Culture  
508-879-9000x133  
[afratantonio@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:afratantonio@mcauliffecharter.org)

Michelle Arons  
Director of Student Services  
508-879-9000x431  
[marons@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:marons@mcauliffecharter.org)

Noel Green  
Executive Director  
508-879-9000x613  
[ngreen@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:ngreen@mcauliffecharter.org)

2. The person bringing the complaint is encouraged to provide a written statement describing the events or conduct at issue. The complainant should do this as soon as possible but no later than thirty (30) days after the complainant becomes aware of the problem. One or more of the investigators will meet with the person to discuss the complaint, determine whether an informal resolution is possible with the investigator's assistance, and/or answer any questions about the formal complaint procedure.
3. If a formal complaint is made, one or more of the investigators will meet with the person who has been accused of improper conduct. The accused person is expected to cooperate with the investigation and may submit a written statement.
4. One or more of the investigators may also meet with witnesses or others who may assist in the factual investigation.
5. Depending on the nature of the allegations, Framingham Police Department may be contacted.
6. In some situations, the school may have a neutral party, such as contracted professionals from HR Knowledge, conduct the investigation and provide a written report to the school.

In the event that the findings of the investigator(s) indicate that sexual harassment, discrimination or other inappropriate behavior has not occurred, the matter will be closed. The person making the complaint and the person accused will be informed in writing of the results of the investigation no later than twenty (20) working days after its filing. The deadline may be waived by mutual agreement. This written response will explain the position of McAuliffe.

#### Disciplinary Action

In the event that the investigation reveals that sexual harassment, discrimination, other unlawful conduct, or other inappropriate conduct (even if not unlawful) has occurred, further action will be taken, including but not limited to

disciplinary action such as but not limited to reprimand, change in work assignment, suspension, or termination in accordance with all relevant laws. Consequences for students may include but are not limited to before or after school consequences, suspension, expulsion, restorative practices, community service.

### **Confidentiality**

All actions taken to investigate and resolve complaints through this process shall be conducted with as much privacy and discretion as possible without compromising the thoroughness and fairness of the investigation. To conduct a thorough investigation, investigators may need to discuss the complaint with witnesses and those persons involved in or affected by the complaint, as well as with those persons who are assisting with the investigation or implementing disciplinary actions.

### **No Retaliation for Filing a Complaint of Sexual Harassment or Unlawful Discrimination**

Retaliation against any individual for making a complaint of sexual harassment or unlawful discrimination or for participating in or assisting in the investigation of such a complaint is illegal and will not be tolerated. Any acts of retaliation will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, such as (but not limited to) reprimand, change in work assignment, suspension or immediate termination.

### **Appeals and Additional Resources**

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the determination made by the district-wide investigators, the final level of appeal within the district is to the Executive Director. The written determination by the Executive Director will be provided to the complainant no later than fifteen (15) working days after formal receipt of any appeal.

### **State and Federal Agencies**

If you believe you have been subjected to sexual harassment or unlawful discrimination, you may file a formal complaint with either or both of the government agencies listed below. Using the complaint procedure described in this policy does not prohibit you from filing a complaint with the following agencies:

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission  
One Congress St., Boston, MA 02114  
(617) 565-3200

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination  
One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108  
(617) 727-3990

### **Dissemination**

Policy shall be disseminated to all employees of the McAuliffe in August or September of each school year.

## **Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan**

### **Introduction**

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The Christa McAuliffe Charter School (McAuliffe) is committed to ensuring that each child in the district is healthy, safe, engaged, challenged, and supported. To this end, McAuliffe is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free of bullying and cyberbullying. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning by preventing and eliminating all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede student growth and development.

The Christa McAuliffe Charter School prohibits all forms of harassment, discrimination and hate crimes including but not limited to: race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, homelessness, age, academic status, emotional/physical development, and sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. McAuliffe will take specific steps, outlined in this plan to create a safe, supportive environment for those particularly vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing. McAuliffe will take specific steps outlined in the policy to respond to potential bullying incidents.

## Statement Prohibiting Bullying, Cyberbullying, and Retaliation

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According to Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L.c. 71, §370) the definition of bullying and cyberbullying are:

**Bullying:** “The repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.”

**Cyberbullying:** “Bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.”

Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited at the Christa McAuliffe Charter School and include the following:

- I. on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds; at a school-sponsored or school-related activity; at a function or program whether on or off school grounds; at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; on school-issued accounts, through school-issued account access or on school-issued collaboration tools and
- II. at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school if the act creates a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringes on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of the school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited.

As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, §370, nothing in this Plan requires McAuliffe to staff any non-school-related activities, functions, or programs.

As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, §3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of his/her disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

## Plan Development and Updates

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As required by M.G.L. c. 71, §370, McAuliffe's Bullying Prevention & Intervention Plan (otherwise known as Plan) has been developed in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians.

## Leadership, Culture Team, Student Culture Team, and Gender Sexuality Alliance

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McAuliffe places a strong emphasis on ensuring that each child in our school is healthy, safe, engaged and supported. Leadership plays a critical role in developing and implementing a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan as well as other whole school and community efforts to promote a positive school climate. Leaders have a primary role in teaching students to be civil to one another and promoting understanding of and respect for diversity and differences. The leaders within the school community have primary responsibility for bullying prevention and intervention in collaboration with the parents/guardians and community members of the school.

The Plan is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying. McAuliffe is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence and harassment. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. School leaders, namely the Director of Culture, Dean of Students, and Executive Director, are responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan.

The school's Culture Leadership Team, led by the Director of Culture and composed of the Dean of Students, PBIS consultant, teacher representatives from each grade and school counselors, also play a critical role in building a safe school culture. The Director of Culture with a school counselor also facilitates a Student Culture Team. This is a team that empowers students to take more ownership of establishing a safe and positive student culture. The Student Culture Team has become a vital part to the school community and continues to assist professionals to create a positive and safe learning environment for all students.

## A Proactive Approach to Bullying Prevention

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### Educating Students

The school is responsible for educating students about the following: their responsibilities as members of the community, the distinction between bullying and conflict, the definition of cyberbullying, and what to do if they experience, witness, or learn about bullying or cyberbullying behavior occurring. Additionally, the school aims to teach students how to be upstanders who refuse to accept mean or rude behavior, including bullying and cyberbullying. Educating our scholars on bullying prevention occurs primarily during crew and grade level meetings. Students also learn about digital citizenship during their Technology for Learning and Life (T4L2) course. The following resources are used to support the development of a safe and positive learning environment as well as to educate students on the prevention of and response to bullying and cyberbullying.

### Curriculum

Massachusetts law requires each school to provide age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention. McAuliffe's EL Education program proactively attends to the social and emotional development of middle school students on a daily basis. Specific key design elements attend explicitly to social and emotional learning: Crew, Social Thinking Labs, Adventure, Wellness, Technology for Learning and Life (T4L2), Community Meetings and Grade-Level Meetings.

The following evidence-based curriculum is integrated into these parts of the school's program:

- **Socio-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum based in ELs Crew Curriculum.** This curriculum is provided by EL and taught in Crew lessons. The curriculum is based in CASEL's five competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. SEL seeks to build student understandings and competencies in the areas of Respect, Empathy, Compassion, Integrity and Character development. Lessons are delivered to scholars through Crew in order to help create upstanders who contribute to a better world.

- **Social Thinking:** A subset of McAuliffe students participate in social thinking classes during the school's Intervention/Enrichment Goal Block, which meets three times per week. The curriculum is an adaptation of materials developed by Michelle Garcia Winner, Founder and CEO of Social Thinking, M.A., CCC-SLP. Social Thinking language and principles have also been integrated into the classrooms in order to assist all students who may need help developing social skills.
- **Technology for Learning and Life (T4L2):** T4L2 is a related arts course that all students at McAuliffe participate in annually. The T4L2 curriculum includes education on digital citizenship. T4L2 curriculum is aligned with Massachusetts Digital Literacy and Computer Science Standards which include the following standards related to digital citizenship:
  - 6-8.CAS.a.2 Describe how cyberbullying can be prevented and managed.
  - 6-8.CAS.a.4 Describe and use safe, appropriate, and responsible practices (netiquette) when participating in online communities (e.g., discussion groups, blogs, social networking sites).
  - 6-8.CAS.b.4 Identify the legal consequences of sending or receiving inappropriate content (e.g., cyberbullying, harassment, sexting).
  - 6-8.CAS.b.6 Demonstrate compliance with the school's Acceptable Use Policy [AUP].

### Building a Safe and Positive School Culture

The following elements of the school's program support the development of a safe and positive school environment:

- **Crew:** Crew is a key element of McAuliffe's charter and program. In Crew students meet with 10 - 11 other students on a daily basis with a member of the McAuliffe faculty. The faculty who leads crew are called Crew Leaders. These pro-social meetings can be used to discuss difficult topics such as bullying and other academic concerns while allowing students to look to peers for support. During Crew, students participate in SEL lessons. The crew leader serves as an advisor for the students in the crew and as the primary point person for parents/guardians.
- **Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS):** The Culture Leadership Team serves as the school's PBIS team which facilitates the development and implementation of schoolwide systems of support that include strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behavioral expectations. Schoolwide expectations for specific parts of a scholar's school day experience are defined, taught, posted, and re-taught, as needed, during the year.
- **Habits of Work and Learning (HOWLs):** Teachers integrate the instruction of the school's HOWLs (collaboration, inquiry, perseverance, responsibility, and kindness) into curriculum and daily lessons. Teachers monitor each student's progress in each HOWL by creating daily HOWLs targets and providing scholars with feedback regarding their ability to exemplify each daily HOWLs target. **HOWLs Cards:** Professionals give HOWLs cards to students when they are modeling the school's Habits of Work and Learning and expected behaviors. This is part of the schoolwide PBIS program.
- **Grade-Level Meetings (GLM):** McAuliffe's Grade-Level Meetings take place once per month. During GLMs, the Student Culture Team facilitates a meeting that includes community building activities, distribution of Special Thanks and Recognition Awards (STAR awards), and address areas that are needed for growth. Topics such as celebrating individuality, including others, and being kind to everyone are frequently brought up during the meetings. The GLM is also used for students to engage with their peers in a prosocial way. GLMs also provide a venue for a guest speaker or group to present on a specific topic.
- **Counselors:** The school employs three grade level counselors. The grade level counselors serve as the counseling liaison for their students and families for all three years at the school. The process is referred to as "looping" and is used to help students have a consistent supportive adult all three years at McAuliffe. All students have access to their grade level counselor throughout the day. Counselors will support scholars to navigate social, emotional, and academic difficulties, they may mediate when there's a conflict between peers, and they are often involved in bullying investigations. The school also employs one adjustment counselor who primarily works with students

who receive social, emotional, and behavioral support and counseling through an individualized education program (IEP).

- **Small-Group Interventions:** The counseling department provides students with group counseling that promotes prosocial skills like lunch bunches. The counseling department also facilitates groups that help address a variety of issues that may include but are not limited to such topics as peer conflict that targets bullying as well as the topic of relational aggression.

### Students Leading Students

The following student leadership groups contribute to the prevention of bullying:

- **Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA):** The GSA is a group led by students and faculty advisors to create a safe space for students of all sexual orientations and gender identities. Students discuss, learn, educate, and act on topics relating to the LGBTQ+ community and its allies. The GSA is open to all students and faculty and currently meets once a week either after school in a classroom or virtually. The team's mission is to continue to promote inclusivity as they collaborate on various projects throughout the year like the Day of Silence and Boston Pride Parade.
- **Student Culture Team (SCT):** Incorporating students in proactive building of school culture is critical to a successful anti-bullying campaign. The SCT, facilitated by the Culture & Character Coach and school counselors, focuses on decreasing patterns of negative behavior (rumors, drama, gossip) and increasing students being upstanders who treat one another with kindness and respect. The team also focuses on creating a positive school environment by bringing spirit and pride to the school. Members of the team may mentor other students in the school who are having a difficult time and become trained in peer mediation to help peers solve conflicts.

### Bullying Prevention for Students with Disabilities

IEP Teams must determine whether the sections 7 and 8 provisions of the Massachusetts Bullying Prevention and Intervention Law apply to eligible students. The provisions apply if the student's disability (a) is on the autism spectrum, or (b) affects social skills development, or (c) makes the student vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing. For students on the autism spectrum, protection under the law will be automatic. For students in the other two categories, the Team must make a determination at the annual IEP meeting as to whether the student's disability affects social skills development or renders the student vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing. Teams should be aware that students with emotional impairments, developmental delays, health impairments, communication disorders, and neurological impairments are likely to have a disability that affects their social skills development. However, Teams should carefully evaluate whether students with any type of impairment have delays in social skills development or are otherwise vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of their disability. Each IEP Team makes the determination on an individual basis. If there are additional concerns regarding vulnerability to bullying, harassment, or teasing during the course of the school year, any IEP Team member is able to request a meeting to discuss and address the concern.

After the IEP Team has identified a student's needs, the IEP Team should discuss what goals, objectives, services, supports, instruction, and accommodations should be included in the student's IEP. The IEP Team uses McAuliffe's Documentation of Bullying Prevention and Intervention at IEP Meetings form to consider and address five areas: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Using the law's framework to guide the IEP development process is a helpful way of ensuring that all of a student's needs are taken into account and that the IEP, with appropriate accommodations, is aligned with the school's and district's broader efforts to prevent and intervene in incidents of bullying. In addition, using the law's framework helps to ensure that the necessary adjustments to the school environment needed to support and reinforce the student are addressed.

### Policy Training

This plan reflects the requirements under M.G.L. c. 71, §370 to provide ongoing professional development for all staff, including but not limited to educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, and advisors.

There will be a yearly training for all staff on procedure and policy of the McAuliffe Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. This will be done within the first three months of the academic year. An agenda and sign-in sheet will be retained. The school will record the presentation each year so that those not present can review the presentation at a later date.

The training/review includes the following personnel in addition to teachers: support staff such as cafeteria, custodial, administrative staff, and technology staff. Bus drivers will receive training from the Framingham Public Schools district.

Annual training for all school staff on the Plan will include staff responsibilities under the Plan, an overview of the steps that the Director of Culture or designee will take upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, and an overview of the bullying prevention curricula to be offered at all grades throughout the school or district.

New Hires: Staff members hired after the start of the school year are required to participate in school-based training during the school year in which they are hired. This training will include watching a recording of the bullying presentation, reading the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, and meeting with the Director of Culture to clarify any questions that arise.

### **Professional Development**

Professional development will establish a common understanding of the tools necessary for staff to create a climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for differences. Professional development will build the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, §370, the content of schoolwide professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:

- Developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
- Developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- Information regarding complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witness to the bullying;
- Research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment;
- Information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and
- Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.

Additionally, McAuliffe faculty and staff engage in anti-bias and anti-racism professional development on at least an annual basis.

### **Policies and Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Bullying and Retaliation**

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The Christa McAuliffe Charter School prohibits bullying, as defined above. This school will not tolerate retaliation against persons who take action consistent with this or other school policy.

### **Student Responsibilities**

Each student is responsible for:

1. Ensuring that he/she does not bully another person on school grounds or in a school-related function, event, or activity; or bully another person at a location or function that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not related to the school, which creates a hostile environment at school which may infringe on the rights of the target, or disrupt the education process or orderly operation of the school.
2. Ensuring that he/she does not retaliate against any other person for reporting or filing a complaint, for aiding or encouraging the filing of a report or complaint, or for cooperating in an investigation of harassment, bullying, discrimination, or a hate crime; and
3. Cooperating in the investigation of reports or complaints of harassment, bullying, discrimination, retaliation, or a hate crime.

## Reporting

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents/guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member will be recorded in writing. All faculty and staff have copies of the bullying incident reporting form. The main office also has copies of this form in English, Spanish, and Portuguese. The form is also available at [www.mcauliffecharter.org/resources](http://www.mcauliffecharter.org/resources). McAuliffe staff members are required to report immediately to the Director of Culture or designee any instance of bullying or retaliation he/she becomes aware of or witnesses.

Reports made by students, parents/guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members may be made by the following methods:

- Verbally report or email any faculty member including crew leader, teacher, counselor, or school leader.
- Complete a Bullying Incident Report Form and turn it into the Director of Culture, Dean of Students, a School Counselor, a Crew leader or a teacher. Note: use of the incident form is not required as a condition of making a report.
  - Include a copy of the Bullying Incident Report Form in the family handbook.
  - Post the form on the school's website: [www.mcauliffecharter.org/resources](http://www.mcauliffecharter.org/resources).
  - The bullying form will be available at the school's main office, counselors' offices, school nurse and other locations determined by the Director of Culture.
  - The Incident Reporting Form will be made available in the following languages: English, Portuguese, and Spanish.

**Reporting by School Employees:** School employees are taught how to identify potential bullying in an annual bullying prevention and intervention workshop. A Staff member will report immediately to the Director of Culture or designee when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The Staff member will also assist students in the moment when he/she witnesses bullying or retaliation occurring. The requirement to report to the Director of Culture or designee does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or district policies and procedures for behavior management.

**Reporting by Students, Parents/Guardians, and Others:** The school or district expects students, parents/guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the Director of Culture or designee. Students, parents/guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private, and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the Director of Culture or designee.

**Anonymous Reporting:** An anonymous Bullying Incident Report Form may be submitted, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

## Bullying Investigation Protocol

In our school community, we do not tolerate bullying behaviors. The response to bullying will depend on the severity of the incident. Within a reasonable amount of time, the Director of Culture or designee will respond to the report of bullying. ("Reasonable amount of time" typically means within 48 hours.) The following steps outline the processes and procedures followed during a bullying investigation.

1. Safety
  - a. Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the Director of Culture or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a "safe person" for the target to check in with; and altering the aggressor's schedule and access to the target.

The Director of Culture or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

- b. The Director of Culture or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation. School Counselors and the School Resource Officer will be notified, if appropriate.
- c. The Director of Culture or designee will make an immediate assessment regarding the safety of all individual students involved. If the incident reported involves off-campus bullying or cyberbullying, a determination will be made if there is an immediate threat to any students involved. If it is determined that bullying has occurred, a report will be made immediately to the Framingham Police Department. Further actions will be coordinated with the School Resource Officer.
- d. If the incident involves on-campus bullying or cyberbullying, a determination will be made if there is an immediate threat of violence to any students involved. If there is an immediate threat of violence, then a report will be made immediately to the Framingham Police Department. Further actions will be coordinated with the School Resource Officer.
- e. After the determination that an act of bullying or retaliation has occurred and after appropriate discipline has been enforced, the Director of Culture or designee will develop a Safety Plan with the students, or with a member of school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, crew leader, an extracurricular activity staff or paraprofessional. The parents/guardians of students will be involved in the development of the Safety Plan. Teachers and other appropriate staff members will be notified of the incident, the parties involved, and their roles in the incident along with the provisions of the Safety Plan.

## 2. Obligations to Notify Others

- a. Notice to parents/guardians: Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the Director of Culture or designee will promptly notify the parents/guardians of the target and the aggressor of the bullying, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the Director of Culture or designee contacts parents/guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations 603 CMR 49.00. Notification will be made by phone, with a follow-up email if phone contact cannot be made.
- b. Notice to Another School or District: If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, nonpublic school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the Director of Culture or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the Director of Culture or designee of the other schools of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.
- c. Notice to Transportation Department: If the reported incident took place on a school bus, the Director of Culture or designee will inform the transportation department of the incident and may request a video of the bus as part of an investigation. The Director of Culture or designee will also inform the transportation department of any consequences related to bus riding (e.g., suspension from the bus, removal from the bus, assigned seating on the bus, etc).
- d. Notice to Law Enforcement: At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the Director of Culture or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the Director of Culture or designee will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00. In making this determination, the Director of Culture or designee will consult with the School Resource Officers.

Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the Director of Culture or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the student aggressor.

3. Investigate

- a. The Director of Culture or designee will promptly investigate all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved. The school aims for investigations to take not more than two school days. Depending on the nature of the allegation(s) and on the presence or absence of those involved, investigations may take longer. The school will do its best to communicate with families to keep them updated, especially in the case that the investigation is taking multiple days.
- b. During the investigation the Director of Culture or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents/guardians, and others as necessary. The Director of Culture or designee will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.
- c. Interviews may be conducted by the Director of Culture or designee, other staff members as determined by the Director of Culture or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the Director of Culture or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process to the extent that is consistent with state and federal law. The Director of Culture or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.
- d. Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with school policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the Director of Culture or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation after consultation with the Executive Director.
- e. The Director of Culture or designee will provide the families of the students involved with phone call or email updates, especially in the case that the investigation lasts multiple days. Often parents/guardians wish to know exactly what will happen to an aggressor during the investigation and/or disciplinary phase, and this is a natural reaction. However, educators in the United States must obey the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which prohibits the school from sharing any information in a minor-age student's record – including disciplinary records and information – to third parties without parental consent. Massachusetts General Law similarly prohibits the dissemination of any student record information to third parties without parental consent (603 CMR 23.07[4]). The result of this is that school officials may not divulge how they have disciplined the student determined to be the aggressor, even to the parents/guardians of the target in the incident. School officials must obey state and federal laws which mandate that they keep student records confidential and private.

4. Interview Protocol: *The following interviews listed do not necessarily occur sequentially. The Director of Culture or designee will determine the sequence of interviews on a case by case basis.*

- a. Interview the Reporter/Witness (individual who reported/witnessed the bullying and is not the alleged target):
  - Ask reporter/s to share a narrative of the event(s).
  - Ask reporter/s to identify potential witnesses.
  - Encourage reporter/s to report any additional incidents with the alleged aggressor and/or any retaliation done directly or anonymously.
  - Document the reporter's statement.
- b. Interview Alleged Target of Bullying:
  - Interview the target in private and with a school counselor if determined necessary.

- Ask target/s to share a narrative of the event(s).
  - Ask target/s to identify students or other members of the community (e.g., teachers, coaches) who may have witnessed the event(s).
  - Inquire about the history of interactions between the alleged target and aggressor (friendship, conflict, etc).
  - Encourage target/s to report any additional incidents with the alleged aggressor and/or any retaliation done directly or anonymously.
  - Document the target’s statement.
- c. Interview Witnesses:
- Ask witness/es to share a narrative of the event(s).
  - Ask witness/es to identify other potential witnesses.
  - Encourage witness/es to report any additional incidents with the alleged aggressor and/or any retaliation done directly or anonymously.
  - Document the witness statement(s).
- d. Interview the Alleged Aggressor:
- Identify the problem; ask witness/es to share a narrative of the event(s).
  - Focus more on the alleged aggressor’s behavior, protecting the target’s confidentiality.
  - Make the alleged aggressor aware of consequences of retaliation against target/s and reporter/s.
  - Document the alleged aggressor’s statement.

## 5. Determinations

The Director of Culture or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. The Director of Culture or designee will promptly notify the parents/guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notices to parents/guardians must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the Director of Culture or designee cannot report specific information to the target’s parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a “stay away” order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations. (A “stay away” order is established through work with the court system.)

- a. **Conclusion of Bullying:** If the determination is made that bullying behavior took place, the incident will be documented as bullying. Per the Code of Conduct bullying consequences may include in- or out-of-school suspension. The school will follow the steps outlined in the Discipline Policy to ensure due process. When determining the specific consequence for the behavior, the Director of Culture or designee will review all relevant facts, including but not limited to: 1) previous disciplinary record, 2) severity of disruption to the educational process, 3) degree of danger to self and/or others, 4) the degree to which the student is willing to change his/her inappropriate behavior, and 5) whether alternative consequences are appropriate to re-engage the student in learning. In addition to consequences, a fix-it plan may be established. A fix-it plan will include reflection questions and tasks to make things right with their peers or anyone else who was affected by their behavior.
- b. **Conclusion of No Bullying, Discipline Referral:** If there is not a determination of bullying, but there is evidence of a student or students breaking the Code of Conduct, the Director of Culture or designee will conclude the investigation as a “Discipline Referral” and will determine relevant consequences and fix-it planning.
- c. **Conclusion of No Bullying, No Discipline Referral:** If there is not a determination that bullying or other behavior occurred, the Director of Culture or designee will close the investigation with a conclusion of

“no bullying,” and no other discipline referral will be made at that time. Depending on the situation, other actions may be identified including conflict resolution or mediation.

## 6. Responses to Bullying

If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the Director of Culture or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The Director of Culture or designee will: 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.

Depending upon the circumstances, the Director of Culture or designee may choose to consult with a student's teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or aggressor's parents/guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

### Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-building

Upon the Director of Culture's or designee's determination that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school or district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, § 370 (d) (v).

Skill-building approaches that the Director of Culture or designee may consider include:

- Offering individualized and group skill-building sessions;
- Providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with counselors and other school personnel;
- Implementing a range of academic and nonacademic supports to help students understand prosocial ways to achieve their goals;
- Meeting with parents/guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills-building activities at home and outside of school;
- Adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills/emotional regulation.
- Making a referral for evaluation.

### Taking Disciplinary Action

If the Director of Culture or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the Director of Culture or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the Plan and with the school's Code of Conduct.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which should be read in cooperation with state laws regarding student discipline.

Any student who knowingly makes false charges or brings a malicious complaint may be subject to any of the disciplinary and/or corrective action(s) detailed above.

In addition to formal consequences (e.g., in-school or out of school suspension), a fix-it plan may be assigned and require the student to complete the following in addition to receiving other consequences such as:

- A safety contract;
- An apology to the target and family;
- Loss of privileges like recess or eating in the cafe;
- Removal from fieldwork or other school outing;
- Exclusion from participation in school-sponsored functions, after-school programs, and/or extracurricular activities.

### Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

The Director of Culture or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. One strategy that the Director of Culture or designee may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur.

Within a reasonable period of time (typically within 1-2 weeks--earlier depending on the circumstances) following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the Director of Culture or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the Director of Culture or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

## 6. Communication

The Director of Culture or designee will communicate the results of the bullying investigation to the target and aggressor in addition to their parents/guardians and staff members.

- **Aggressor:** In the case that there is a finding of bullying or other discipline referral, the aggressor will be reminded of expectations regarding interactions with the target and regarding consequences for any retaliation and/or future bullying behavior. In the case that there is not a finding of bullying or other discipline referral, the Director of Culture or designee will communicate that the school will be monitoring the safety of both/all students involved, reiterate expectations for safe and respectful interactions and non-retaliation, and confirm an adult he/she will speak with about the situation as needed (e.g. counselor).
- **Target:** Whether or not there is a finding of bullying or other discipline referral, the focus of the conversation will be on action steps and safety planning. He/she will also be reminded to immediately report any incidents with the aggressor and/or any retaliation done directly or anonymously. The Director of Culture or designee will communicate that the school will continue monitoring the safety of both/all students involved and confirm the adult he/she will speak with about the situation as needed (e.g., counselor).
- **Parents/Guardians:** The Director of Culture or designee will communicate the results of the bullying investigation with the parents/guardians of the target and alleged aggressor. The Director of Culture or designee will communicate additional actions and safety planning.
- **Staff Members:** The Director of Culture or designee will communicate results of the bullying investigation to the faculty/staff involved in the investigation. In the case that there is a conclusion of bullying, teachers, crew leaders, and coaches who have contact with the target and aggressor will be alerted of safety planning that articulates expectations regarding interactions between the students. Faculty/staff give updates to the Director of Culture and/or counselors regarding implementation of the safety plan, especially any challenges in implementation of the plan. Grade level teams will check in on safety plans, as needed, during grade level team meetings which are attended by school counselor for that grade level.
- **School Resource Officer:** The Director of Culture or designee may communicate determinations of bullying to the School Resource Officer.

### Communication with Law Enforcement

The Director of Culture or designee may disclose a determination of bullying or retaliation to a local law enforcement agency under 603 CMR 49.06 without the consent of a student or his/her parent. The Director of Culture or designee shall communicate with law enforcement officials in a manner that protects the privacy of targets, student witnesses, and aggressors to the extent practicable under the circumstances.

In addition, the Director of Culture or designee may disclose student record information about a target or aggressor to appropriate parties in addition to law enforcement in connection with a health or safety emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals as provided in 603 CMR 23.07(4)(e) and 34 CMR 99.31(a)(10) and 99.36. 603 CMR 49.07(3). The discretion of the Director of Culture or designee is limited to instances in which he/she has determined there is an immediate and significant threat to the health or safety of the student or other individuals and to the period of emergency; it does not allow for blanket disclosure of student record information. The Director of Culture or designee must document the disclosures and the reasons that the Director of Culture or designee determined that a health or safety emergency exists.

### **False Charges**

Any student who knowingly makes false charges or brings a malicious complaint may be subject to any of the disciplinary and/or corrective action(s) detailed above.

### **Protection Against Retaliation**

Threats or acts of retaliation, whether person to person, by electronic means, or through third parties, are serious offenses that will subject the violator to significant disciplinary and other corrective action, including short- or long-term suspension or expulsion. The school is responsible for communicating to all parties in the investigation expectations of non-retaliation and potential consequences for retaliation. Additional incidents of bullying with the alleged aggressor and/or retaliation should be reported directly or anonymously.

### **Collaboration with Families**

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#### **Parent/Guardian Responsibility**

As a parent or guardian, you can help by reading this policy with your child, and discussing the language and expectations with them. Our work is evolving, and your input on this policy is welcome. We will need your help to model positive behaviors and social relationships for our children, so that the messages between home and school are consistent and reliable.

#### **Parent/Guardian Education and Resources**

McAuliffe may offer education programs for parents/guardians that are focused on the parental components of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. The programs will be offered in collaboration with the Parent Teacher Group and the Special Education Parent Advisory Council. The school aims to provide at least one evening presentation for families on an annual basis. The school will advertise the educational opportunity through the weekly newsletter, the public school events calendar posted on the website, and through the school's Facebook page and parent/guardian Facebook group. Additionally, the school will advertise other local educational opportunities for parents/guardians such as presentations hosted by Spark Kindness or other school districts. The school will also share information and resources with parents/guardians through the newsletter which is sent home each Friday and through blog posts. Resources may include articles, videos, or opportunities to participate in a webinar.

#### **Notification Requirements**

Each year the school will inform parents/guardians of enrolled students about the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyberbullying and online safety. The school will send parents/guardians a written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the school's or district's Internet safety policy. All notices and information made available to parents/guardians will be in hard-copy and electronic formats, and will be available in English, Spanish, and Portuguese. The school will post the Plan and related information on its website.

#### **Problem Resolution System**

Any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside of the district may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). Emails can be sent to [compliance@doe.mass.edu](mailto:compliance@doe.mass.edu); or individuals can call 781-338-3700.

#### **Appendix A: Glossary**

**BULLYING as defined by M.G.L. c. 71 § 370 as** repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another student that has the effect of (i) causing physical or emotional harm to the other student or damage to the other student's property; (ii) placing the other student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creating a hostile environment at school for the other student; (iv) infringing on the rights of the other student at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupting the education process or the orderly operation of a school or classroom. Includes Cyber Bullying (defined below).

It is equally important for all members of the school community to understand that conflict is not automatically synonymous with bullying. Arguing, bantering back and forth, ignoring, roughhousing, and fighting, while potentially serious forms of conflict, are not necessarily instances of bullying. Bullying is characterized by intention, repetition, and power imbalance. Not every conflict meets these criteria.

**BYSTANDER:** a student or students who witness a situation and who may or may not be directly participating in the bullying behaviors.

**CYBERBULLYING:** bullying through the use of technology or any electronic means, on any electronic device, or by any technological means, and in any location, whether school-related or not. The use of the term bullying at McAuliffe, and in this section of the handbook, shall include cyber bullying.

**HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT:** a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student's education and create an abusive school environment.

**PERPETRATOR or AGGRESSOR:** the student who engages in bullying or retaliation.

**RETALIATION:** any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment by a student directed against any student, staff, or other individual for reporting or filing a complaint, for aiding or encouraging the filing of a report or complaint, for cooperating in an investigation under McAuliffe's Comprehensive Civil Rights Policy, or for taking action consistent with the policy.

**SCHOOL GROUNDS:** property on which a school building or facility is located or property that is owned, leased, or used by a school for any school-sponsored activities, functions, programs, instruction, or training.

**UPSTANDER:** someone who recognizes when something is wrong and acts to make it right. When we stand up for what is right, and do our best to help support and protect someone who is being hurt, we are being socially responsible.

**VICTIM or TARGET:** the student against whom bullying or retaliation has been perpetrated.

**Appendix B: Incident Report Form**

**Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form**

The Christa McAuliffe Charter School expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences in accordance with the school’s core values. McAuliffe does not tolerate bullying or retaliation in school buildings, on school grounds, at bus stops/on buses, or at school-related activities (including but not limited to fieldwork). McAuliffe staff members are required to report immediately to the Director of Culture or designee any instance of bullying or retaliation he/she becomes aware of or witnesses.

**Name of Reporter / Person Filing the Report:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Today’s Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report

Check whether you are the:

- Target of the behavior
- Reporter (not the Target)

Check whether you are a:

- Student  Staff Member (specify role) \_\_\_\_\_
- Parent/Guardian  Administrator  Other \_\_\_\_\_

If you are a McAuliffe student, please circle your grade: 6th 7th 8th

If you are not a student or an employee of the school, please provide your contact information:

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Information about the Incident(s):** Please complete one row per incident. The first row is on the front page; subsequent rows are on the next page/back of this form.

Name of Target (of behavior): \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Aggressor (Person who engaged in the behavior): \_\_\_\_\_

	Date / Time	Location	Description of what happened (Including names of people involved, what occurred, and what each person did and said, including specific words used)	Witness(es) (People who saw the incident or have information about it)
1				
2				

**Information about the Incident(s):** Please complete one row per incident. The first row is on the front page; subsequent rows are below. Please add additional pages as needed.

	Date / Time	Location	Description of what happened (Including names of people involved, what occurred, and what each person did and said, including specific words used)	Witness(es) (People who saw the incident or have information about it)
3				
4				
5				

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**FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY**

Signature of Person Filing this Report: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Note: Reports may be filed anonymously)

Form Given to: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix C: Bullying/Retaliation Investigation and Conclusion Form**

When an investigation regarding bullying and/or retaliation happens, the following form is used to document the incident.

**Investigation Summary**

1. Investigator(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Position(s): \_\_\_\_\_

2. Summary:

3. Interviews:

Interviewed reporter Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewed target Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewed witnesses Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewed aggressor Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name	Date	Notes from Interview / Written Account / Notes from Teacher

3. Any prior documented incidents by the aggressor?  Yes  No  
 If yes, have incidents involved target or target group previously?  Yes  No  
 Any previously incidents with findings of BULLYING or RETALIATION?  Yes  No

4. Summary of Investigation:

**Conclusions**

1. Finding of bullying or retaliation:  Yes  No

Bullying  Incident Documented as \_\_\_\_\_

Retaliation  Discipline Referral only \_\_\_\_\_

2. Contacts:

Target's parent/guardian Date: \_\_\_\_\_  Aggressor's parent/guardian Date: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Action(s) Taken: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Describe Safety Planning: \_\_\_\_\_

Follow-up with Target: scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_ Initial and date when completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Follow-up with Aggressor: scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_ Initial and date when completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature and Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Policy on Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students<sup>9</sup>

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## Introduction

The Christa McAuliffe Charter School has a commitment to maintaining an educational environment and workplace where bigotry and intolerance, including discrimination on the basis of gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, or gender expression is not tolerated and where any form of intimidation, threat, coercion and/or harassment that insults the dignity of others and interferes with their freedom to learn or work is unacceptable.

McAuliffe strictly enforces a prohibition against harassment and discrimination, sexual or otherwise, of any of its students or employees by anyone, including any fellow student, teacher, supervisor, co-worker, vendor, or other third party, as such conduct is contrary to the mission of McAuliffe and its commitment to equal opportunity in education and employment. The School does not and will not discriminate on the basis of gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, or gender expression in the educational programs and activities of the public schools, and strives to create an environment where all students and staff feel safe, welcome and included.

McAuliffe takes allegations of discrimination and harassment seriously and will respond promptly to complaints. Where it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, McAuliffe will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and will impose corrective action as necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate, which may include termination of employment or school-related discipline.

To help create a safe and supportive environment for all students, the school district will remain consistent with applicable laws and guidance regarding transgender and gender nonconforming students.

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is:

1. to foster an educational environment that is safe and free from discrimination for all students, regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, and

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<sup>9</sup> This policy was approved by the McAuliffe Board of Trustees on March 24, 2016.

2. to facilitate compliance with local, state and federal laws concerning bullying, harassment and discrimination.

This policy should be interpreted consistent with the goals of reducing the stigmatization of and improving the educational integration of transgender and gender nonconforming students, maintaining the privacy of all students, and fostering cultural competence and professional development for school staff. Furthermore, this policy will support healthy communication between educators and parents/guardians to further the successful educational development and well-being of every student.

### MA DESE Guidance

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has provided guidance to Massachusetts Districts and Charter Schools to support the implementation of the law. Below is the opening section of text from the DESE guidance. McAuliffe's policy is fully aligned with the 2013 DESE guidance as well as state and federal law.

#### Guidance for Massachusetts Public Schools Creating a Safe and Supportive School Environment Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity

An Act Relative to Gender Identity (Chapter 199 of the Acts of 2011), which became effective on July 1, 2012, amended several Massachusetts statutes prohibiting discrimination on the basis of specified categories, to include discrimination on the basis of gender identity. Among the statutes amended is G.L. c. 76, § 5, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of gender identity against students who enroll in or attend the public schools. G.L. c. 76, § 5 now reads as follows:

Every person shall have a right to attend the public schools of the town where he/she actually resides, subject to the following section. No school committee is required to enroll a person who does not actually reside in the town unless said enrollment is authorized by law or by the school committee. Any person who violates or assists in the violation of this provision may be required to remit full restitution to the town of the improperly-attended public schools. **No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.** (Emphasis added)

In June 2012, the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) adopted revised Access to Equal Education Opportunity Regulations, 603 CMR 26.00, and Charter School Regulations, 603 CMR 1.00, to reflect the broadened student anti-discrimination provision in G.L. c. 76, § 5. The Board also directed the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) to provide guidance to school districts to assist in implementing the gender identity provision.

All students need a safe and supportive school environment to progress academically and developmentally. Administrators, faculty, staff, and students each play an important part in creating and sustaining that environment. This guidance is intended to help school and district administrators take steps to create a culture in which transgender and gender nonconforming students feel safe, supported, and fully included, and to meet each school's obligation to provide equal educational opportunities for all students, in compliance with G.L. c. 76, § 5 and the state regulations. The guidance sets out general principles based on the law, and addresses common issues regarding transgender and gender nonconforming students. It offers case studies based on experiences of schools and students in Massachusetts, and reflects the need to consider issues on a case-by-case basis. The list of issues is not exhaustive, and the examples are intended to be illustrative, not prescriptive.

In preparing this guidance, the Department reviewed policies and guidance from several states, organizations, and athletic associations and consulted with the field. We appreciate the input we received from school and district administrators, advocacy groups, parents, students, and other interested constituents.

**Definitions<sup>10</sup>**

Understanding the terminology associated with gender identity is important to providing a safe and supportive school environment for students whose rights are protected under the law. The following terms appear in this document and are defined to assist in understanding the guidance presented. Although these are the most commonly used terms, students may prefer other terms to describe their gender identity, appearance, or behavior. The term “gender identity” is specifically defined in the Mass. General Laws, as amended by An Act Relative to Gender Identity (the gender identity law).

**Gender Expression:** The manner in which a person represents or expresses gender to others, often through behavior, clothing, hairstyles, activities, voice, or mannerisms.

**Gender Identity:** As defined in part at G.L. c. 4, § 7, is “a person’s gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person’s physiology or assigned sex at birth...”

In addition, GLSEN contributes the following to the definition of Gender Identity: A person's deeply held sense or psychological knowledge of their own gender. One's gender identity can be the same or different from the gender assigned at birth. Most people have a gender identity that matches their assigned gender at birth. For some, however, their gender identity is different from their assigned gender. All people have a gender identity, not just transgender people. Gender identity is an innate, largely inflexible characteristic of each individual's personality that is generally established by age four, although the age at which individuals come to understand and express their gender identity may vary based on each person's social and familial social development.

**Gender Nonconforming:** A term used to describe people whose gender expression differs from stereotypic expectations such as "feminine" boys, "masculine" girls, and those who are perceived as androgynous. This includes people who identify outside traditional gender categories or identify as both genders. Other terms that can have similar meanings include “gender variant”, “gender atypical”, “gender diverse”, and “gender expansive”.

**Transgender:** An umbrella term and adjective used to describe a person whose gender identity or gender expression is different from that traditionally associated with the assigned sex at birth. Other terms that can have similar meanings are transsexual and trans.

**Transition:** The process in which a person goes from living and identifying as one gender to living and identifying as another.

**Sex:** Refers to the chromosomal, hormonal, and anatomical characteristics that are used to classify an individual as female or male or intersex.

**Sexual Orientation:** The type of sexual, romantic, emotional/spiritual attraction one feels for others.

**Bullying:** Bullying means written, verbal or physical conduct that adversely affects the ability of one or more students to participate in or benefit from the school's educational programs or activities by placing the student (or students) in

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<sup>10</sup> A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY: Transgender and gender nonconforming youth use a number of words to describe their lives and gendered experiences. To list just a few examples, these students may refer to themselves as trans, transsexual, transgender, male-to-female (MTF), female-to-male (FTM), bi-gender, two-spirit, trans man, trans woman, and a variety of other terms. Terminology and language describing transgender individuals can differ based on region, language, race or ethnicity, age, culture, and many other factors. Generally speaking, school staff and educators should inquire which terms students may prefer and avoid terms that make these students uncomfortable; a good general guideline is to employ those terms which the students use to describe themselves.

reasonable fear of physical harm. This includes conduct that is based on a student's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, or homelessness [or any other distinguishing characteristics that may be included by the state or local educational agency]. This also includes conduct that targets a student because of a characteristic of a friend, family member, or other person or group with whom a student associates.

**Harassment:** Harassment means written, verbal or physical conduct that adversely affects the ability of one or more students to participate in or benefit from the school's educational programs or activities because the conduct is so severe, persistent or pervasive. This includes conduct that is based on a student's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion [or any other distinguishing characteristics that may be defined by the state or local educational agency]. This also includes conduct that targets a student because of a characteristic of a friend, family member, or other person or group with whom a student associates.

### Scope

This policy covers conduct that takes place in the school, on school property, at school-sponsored events and activities, on fieldwork, on school buses or vehicles and at bus stops. This policy also pertains to usage of electronic technology and electronic communication that occurs in the school, on school property, at school-sponsored events and activities, on fieldwork, on school buses or vehicles and at bus stops, and on school computers, networks, forums, and mailing lists. This policy applies to the entire school community, including faculty, staff, students, parents, and volunteers.

### Bullying, Harassment, and Discrimination

Discrimination, bullying, and harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression shall be prohibited within the school. It is the responsibility of the school and all staff to ensure that all students, including transgender and gender nonconforming students, have a safe school environment. The scope of this responsibility includes ensuring that any incident of discrimination, harassment, or bullying is given immediate attention, including investigating the incident, taking age and developmentally appropriate corrective action, and providing students and staff with appropriate resources. Complaints alleging discrimination or harassment based on a person's actual or perceived gender identity or expression are to be taken seriously and handled in the same manner as other discrimination, bullying, or harassment complaints.

A student, family member, friend, or faculty concerned about the possibility of bullying, harassment, and/or discrimination taking place in the McAuliffe community is encouraged to report the incident or concern to one of the school's civil rights/harassment officers.

The following persons have been designated to investigate complaints of harassment and unlawful discrimination in McAuliffe, and may be contacted to initiate an investigation under this policy:

John Ermilio  
Director of Business & HR  
508-879-9000x616  
[jermilio@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:jermilio@mcauliffecharter.org)

Tony Fratantonio  
Director of Culture  
508-879-9000x133  
[afratantonio@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:afratantonio@mcauliffecharter.org)

Michelle Arons  
Director of Student Services  
508-879-9000x431  
[marons@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:marons@mcauliffecharter.org)

Noel Green  
Executive Director  
508-879-9000x613  
[ngreen@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:ngreen@mcauliffecharter.org)

If a student feels more comfortable communicating with another preferred adult (e.g. crew leader, teacher, counselor, coach, or faculty liaison to the GSA), we encourage the student to do so. That member of faculty/staff is responsible for reporting the allegations to one of the identified civil rights/harassment officers who are responsible for leading an investigation. Please see the school's policies for bullying and harassment for more information.

## Guidance on Notifying Parents When a Student Has Been Bullied Based on Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity/Expression

The bullying intervention and prevention statute, G.L. c.71, §370, as added by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, requires school officials to notify the parents or guardians of an aggressor and target when bullying has occurred. The following guidance is issued to assist school officials in implementing this requirement, which is further addressed at Section 49.05 of the Notification of Bullying or Retaliation Regulations, 603 CMR 49.00. It highlights considerations and concerns unique to notifying the parent or guardian of a student who has been bullied due to perceived or actual sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.<sup>3</sup> Bullying related to perceived sexual orientation and gender identity/expression may be directed toward students, regardless of how they identify.

This document is informed by research showing that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth with high levels of family acceptance have significantly higher levels of self-esteem and better overall health, compared with LGBT youth with low levels of family acceptance. LGBT youth with highly rejecting parents are more than eight times as likely to report suicide attempts, and nearly six times as likely to report high levels of depression. Given these findings, it is likely that LGBT students with rejecting parents will respond differently from LGBT students with accepting parents when they learn that their parents will be notified that they are targets of bullying related to sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. These findings and considerations have critical implications for how LGBT students and their families are served in our schools. They also underscore the importance of professional development concerning LGBT students and the significance of parental acceptance in fostering their well-being.

In addition, school officials should remember that parents of LGBT students may not be aware of their child's sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. In such cases, students may have grave concerns about their parents' response to learning that they have been targets of bullying related to sexual orientation or gender identity/expression, and feel that this information should not be shared with their parents. Among other things, this means that LGBT students who fear disclosure of their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression to their parents will be much less likely to report that they have been bullied, or to willingly participate in bullying investigations reported by others about them.

It is important to consider that even heterosexual students who are targeted based on perceived sexual orientation or gender identity/expression might be concerned about their parents learning the homophobic nature of the bullying they experience, especially if students consider their parents to hold negative attitudes toward sexual or gender minorities. Finally, whether their child is LGBT or heterosexual, parents may not be prepared to provide adequate, appropriate, or effective support for their children who experience homophobic victimization, and may feel uncomfortable discussing a child's sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.

School officials' awareness of and sensitivity to these issues, and their ability to respond with appropriate resources, is critical to supporting students' safety and well-being.

### The Notification Process

Given the special circumstances of a bullying incident involving actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity/expression, the Department recommends that districts: 1) designate a staff person who is proficient in these topics, and 2) design an appropriate parental notification process for these situations. School officials should be aware that reporting the details of a bullying incident might inadvertently disclose the sexual orientation or gender identity/expression of an LGBT student to his/her parents or to the public. Unintended consequences, such as familial rejection or family conflict, should be considered.

The notification process should include development of a notification plan in consultation with the student, guidance staff, and the above-mentioned designated person (if not part of the guidance staff). The plan should include a discussion of the content and process for notifying the student's parents, informed by an assessment of the student's

safety, along with relevant research and resources that may be offered to support the student and his or her family.<sup>6</sup> As much as possible, if a parent is unaware of an LGBT student's sexual orientation or gender identity/expression, the student should be supported in his or her decision to disclose his or her sexual orientation or gender identity/expression to family members on his or her own terms.

As in any case when particularly sensitive information is shared, the Department strongly recommends that school officials discuss details of the bullying incident with parents in person. School officials should use their discretion in discussing the incident and avoid sharing information that might endanger the mental or physical health and safety of the student. Where the student has not disclosed his or her sexual orientation or gender identity/expression to his or her parents and the student believes he or she may be at risk if it is disclosed, to the extent possible, discussion should focus on facts regarding the student's involvement as a target or aggressor and on safety planning, not on information that reveals the actual or perceived gender identity or sexual orientation of the student. As in all bullying incidents, school officials should offer resources and support to the student and family.

### **Communicating in the Primary Language of the Home**

Since the principal or designee is required to notify parents promptly, the initial communication with parents will most likely take place by telephone. As noted earlier, whenever possible, a detailed discussion should take place in person, particularly if the target is an LGBT student, and the parent is unaware of the student's sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. School officials should not ask students to serve in the role of interpreter with their parents or in situations involving family members such as siblings and cousins. Schools and districts should identify school employees and independent interpreters as needed, who may be trained in all aspects of this guidance and confidentiality requirements, to provide this service.

Sexual orientation and homophobic bullying can have distinct cultural meanings for different racial/ethnic/immigrant groups. For example, in some cultures, the concept of identifying as LGBT or experiencing homophobic victimization may be difficult to translate or describe. Attitudes toward sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression are heavily influenced by cultural and social norms. In situations involving these issues, it is even more important that the notification process be conducted with forethought and discretion.

### **Names and Pronouns**

Every student has the right to be addressed by a name and pronoun that corresponds to the student's gender identity, regardless of the student's assigned birth sex and name that appears on the student's birth certificate. Schools should accurately record and use the student's chosen name and pronouns that are consistent with the student's gender identity. An order is not required to update student records to reflect changes in a student's name and gender markers. The school will work with a student and the parents/guardians of the student if they are involved in the process or in the case of a younger student with the student and the student's parent/guardians, to develop a plan for communicating any name and pronoun change within the school.

The following is a section from the DESE guidelines:

Massachusetts' law recognizes common law name changes. An individual may adopt a name that is different from the name that appears on his or her birth certificate provided the change of name is done for an honest reason, with no fraudulent intent. Nothing more formal than usage is required.[1] Hence, when requested, schools should accurately record the student's chosen name on all records, whether or not the student, parent, or guardian provides the school with a court order formalizing a name change.

The Department has a procedure in place to update name changes and gender markers in the Student Information Management System (SIMS) upon request. The document Assigning State Assigned Student Identifiers (SASIDs) to

Massachusetts' Public School Students, which may be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/data/sims/sasid/>, guides schools through changing names and gender markers on school records.

In sum, school personnel should use the student's chosen name and pronouns appropriate to a student's gender identity, regardless of the student's assigned birth sex. For those students who have been attending a school and undergo gender transition while attending the same school, it is important to develop a plan for initiating use of the chosen name and pronouns consistent with the student's gender identity.

### **Privacy, Confidentiality, and Official Records**

Under state law, information about a student's assigned birth sex, name change for gender identity purposes, gender transition, medical or mental health treatment related to gender identity, or any other information of a similar nature, regardless of its form, is part of the individual's student record (see Massachusetts Student Records Regulations, 603 CMR 23.00), is confidential, and must be kept private and secure, except in limited circumstances. 603 CMR § 23.04.<sup>11</sup> One circumstance is when authorized school personnel require the information to provide administrative, teaching, counseling, or other services to the student in the performance of their official duties. For transgender students, authorized school personnel could include individuals such as the principal, school nurse, classroom teacher(s), or guidance or adjustment counselor.

When a student new to a school is using a chosen name, the birth name is considered private information and may be disclosed only with authorization as provided under the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations. If the student has previously been known at school or in school records by his or her birth name, the principal should direct school personnel to use the student's chosen name. Every effort should be made to update student records (for example, Individualized Education Programs) with the student's chosen name and not circulate records with the student's assigned birth name. Records with the student's assigned birth name should be kept in a separate, confidential file. When determining which, if any, staff or students should be informed that a student's gender identity is different from the assigned birth sex, decisions should be made in consultation with the student. The key question is whether and how sharing the information will benefit the student.

Transgender and gender nonconforming students have the right to discuss and express their gender identity and expression openly and to decide when, with whom, and how much to share private information. The fact that a student chooses to disclose his or her transgender status to staff or other students does not authorize school staff to disclose other medical information about the student. When contacting the parent or guardian of a transgender student, school staff should use the student's legal name and the pronoun corresponding to the student's gender assigned at birth unless the student, parent, or guardian has specified otherwise.

A student who is 14 years of age or older, or who has entered the ninth grade, may consent to disclosure of information from his or her student record. If a student is under 14 and is not yet in the ninth grade, the student's parent (alone) has the authority to decide on disclosures and other student record matters.<sup>12</sup>

The School shall maintain a mandatory permanent student record that includes a student's legal name and legal gender. However, to the extent that the school is not legally required to use a student's legal name and gender on other school records or documents, the school shall use the name and gender preferred by the student. The school will change a student's official record to reflect a change in legal name or gender upon receipt of documentation that such a change has been made pursuant to a court order, or through amendment of state or federally-issued identification. In situations where school faculty or staff are required by law to use or to report a transgender student's legal name or gender, such as for purposes of standardized testing, school staff and administrators shall adopt practices to avoid the inadvertent disclosure of such confidential information.

<sup>11</sup> The federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 USC 1232g, also protects the privacy of education records and requires that personally identifiable information be kept secure and confidential.

<sup>12</sup> See 603 CMR §§23.01 and 23.07. If a student is from 14 through 17 years of age or has entered ninth grade, both the parent and the student may make decisions concerning the student record, or either the student or the parent acting alone may decide.

## Gender Markers on Student Records

A gender marker is the designation on school and other records that indicates a student's gender. For most students, records that include an indication of a student's gender will reflect a student's assigned birth sex. For transgender students, however, a documented gender marker (for example, "male" or "female" on a permanent record) should reflect the student's gender identity, not the student's assigned sex. This means that if a transgender student whose gender identity is male has a school record that reflects an assigned birth sex as female, then upon request by the student the school should change the gender marker on the record to male.<sup>13</sup> The School will collect or maintain information about students' gender only when necessary.

## Restrooms, Locker Rooms, Changing Facilities, and Overnight Fieldwork

All students are entitled to have access to restrooms, locker rooms and changing facilities that are sanitary, safe, and adequate, so they can comfortably and fully engage in their school program and activities. In meeting with the transgender student (and parent) to discuss the issues set forth in this memorandum, it is essential that the school leader and student address the student's access to the restrooms, locker room, changing facility, and overnight fieldwork.

Each situation needs to be reviewed and addressed based on the particular circumstances of the student and the school's facilities. In all cases, the school leader should be clear with the student (and parent) that the student may access the restroom, locker room, changing facility, and fieldwork accommodation that correspond to the student's gender identity. While some transgender students will want that arrangement, others will not be comfortable with it. Transgender students who are uncomfortable using a sex-segregated restroom should be provided with a safe and adequate alternative, such as a single "unisex" restroom, the nurse's restroom, or an individual tent. Similarly, some transgender students may not be comfortable undressing in the changing facilities that correspond to the student's gender identity. The following are examples of ways in which school officials have responded to these situations:

In one middle school, a male-to-female transgender sixth-grader socially transitioned after spring break. For the rest of the school year, she used the nurse's restroom and the other unisex restrooms at the school. Beginning in seventh grade, she used the girls' restroom.

In one high school, a transgender male-to-female student was given access to the female changing facility, but the student was uncomfortable using the female changing facility with other female students because there were no private changing areas within the facility. The principal examined the changing facility and determined that curtains could easily be put up along one side of a row of benches near the group lockers, providing private changing areas for any students who wished to use them. After the school put up the curtains, the student was comfortable using the changing facility.

Some students may feel uncomfortable with a transgender student using the same sex-segregated restroom, locker room or changing facility. This discomfort is not a reason to deny access to the transgender student. School leaders and counseling staff should work with students to address the discomfort and to foster understanding of gender identity, to create a school culture that respects and values all students.

The School has designated restrooms designed for use by one person at a time as accessible to all students regardless of gender. However, under no circumstances may a student be required to use such facilities because they are transgender or gender nonconforming. In addition, the school will work with each student to determine a plan for overnight fieldwork accommodation.

The use of restrooms, changing facilities, and fieldwork accommodations are the more challenging issues presented by the gender identity law, perhaps due to issues of personal privacy. As the DESE emphasizes to schools, these issues will be resolved at the School on a case-by-case basis, through dialogue with students (and parents), and through leadership responsible for creating safe and supportive learning environments.

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<sup>13</sup> The Department's publication *Assigning State Assigned Student Identifiers (SASIDs) to Massachusetts' Public School Students* guides district staff through the process of adding or revising SIMS data.

### **Athletics and other Gender-Based Activities, Rules, Policies and Practices**

All students shall be permitted to participate in interscholastic athletics (whether co-ed or sex-segregated activities) in a manner consistent with their gender identity.

The School will annually evaluate all gender-based activities, rules, policies, and practices—including but not limited to classroom activities, school ceremonies, and school photos—and maintain only those that have a clear and sound pedagogical purpose. Students shall be permitted to participate in any such activities or conform to any such rule, policy, or practice consistent with their gender identity.

Whenever students are separated by gender in school activities or are subject to an otherwise lawful gender-specific rule, policy, or practice, students are permitted to participate in such activities or conform to such rule, policy, or practice consistent with their gender identity.

### **Dress Code**

The School may enforce dress codes pursuant to School policy. Students shall have the right to dress in accordance with their gender identity, within the constraints of the dress codes adopted by the school. School staff shall not enforce a school's dress code more strictly against transgender and gender nonconforming students than other students.

### **Student Transitions**

In order to maintain privacy and confidentiality regarding their transition and gender identity, transgender students may wish—but are not required—to transition over a summer break or between grades. Regardless of the timing of a student's transition, the school shall act in accordance with the following age-appropriate policies.

Generally, notification of a student's parent about his or her gender identity, expression or transition is unnecessary, as they are already aware and may be supportive. In some cases, however, notifying parents carries risks for the student, such as being kicked out of the home. Prior to notification of any parent or guardian regarding the transition process, school staff should work closely with the student to assess the degree to which, if any, the guardian will be involved in the process and must consider the health, wellbeing, and safety of the transitioning student.

When a student transitions during the school year, the school shall hold a meeting with the student (and parents if they are involved in the process) to ascertain their desires and concerns. The school should discuss a timeline for the transition in order to create the conditions supporting a safe and accepting environment at the school. Finally, the school shall train school administrators and any educators that interact directly with the student on the transition plan, timelines for transition, and any relevant legal requirements.

### **Training and Professional Development**

The School shall conduct staff training for all staff members on their responsibilities under applicable laws and this policy, including teachers, administrators, counselors, coaches, and support staff. Information regarding this policy shall be incorporated into training for new school employees. The school will also integrate education about transgender and gender nonconforming students into its anti-bullying curriculum.

To the extent funding is available, the School shall implement ongoing professional development to build the skills of all staff members to prevent, identify and respond to bullying, harassment and discrimination. The content of such professional development shall include, but not be limited to:

1. terms, concepts, and current developmental understandings of gender identity, gender expression, and gender diversity in children and adolescents;
2. developmentally appropriate strategies for communication with students and parents about issues related to gender identity and gender expression that protect student privacy;
3. developmentally appropriate strategies for preventing and intervening in bullying incidents, including cyber-bullying;

4. school policies regarding bullying, discrimination, and gender identity and expression issues and responsibilities of staff.

## Nondiscrimination Statement

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The school does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs and activities, on the basis of race, color or national origin, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI); on the basis of sex, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; on the basis of disability, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title B of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); or on the basis of age, in accordance with the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1974 (ADEA); as well as the basis of gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or homelessness.

No person shall be discriminated against to Christa McAuliffe Charter School on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, age, disability, creed, homelessness, or ethnicity, ancestry, athletic performance, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement, as required by M.G.L.c.71, §89(1); 603 CMR 1.06(1). Finally, no person shall be discriminated against in obtaining the advantages, privileges or access to the courses of study offered by Christa McAuliffe Charter School on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness as required by M.G.L. c. 76, § 5.

### Publication

This policy will be distributed annually and will also be included in any student codes of conduct, disciplinary policies, student handbooks, and school websites.

## Safe Schools Program for LGBTQ Students

[Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Educ. Safe Schools Program for LGBTQ Students.](#)

The Safe Schools Program for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning (LGBTQ) Students is a joint initiative between the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth\*. Founded in 1993 in response to concerns about LGBTQ youth suicides and other risk factors, the program now offers a range of services designed to help schools implement state laws impacting LGBTQ students, including the state's anti-bullying law, gender identity law, and student anti-discrimination law.

The Safe Schools Program for LGBTQ Students provides training, technical assistance, and professional development to school administrators and staff on issues related to gender identity, sexual orientation, and school climate. Requests for assistance can be submitted online, [Submit a Request](#).

The Safe Schools Program also houses the Massachusetts GSA Leadership Council, which supports students in developing leadership skills, making statewide connections with LGBTQ students and allies, and improving school climate. Modeled on the Student Advisory Council to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Massachusetts GSA Leadership Council provides networking and skill-building opportunities for GSA student leaders and advisors to promote student leadership and improve school climate. The GSA Leadership Council consists of a state council and five regional councils.

The Safe Schools Program manages a Massachusetts GSA Advisor Listserv, which can be accessed by emailing [safeschoolsprogram@doe.mass.edu](mailto:safeschoolsprogram@doe.mass.edu).

### Safe Schools Program Contact Info

Email: [safeschoolsprogram@doe.mass.edu](mailto:safeschoolsprogram@doe.mass.edu)

Phone: 781-338-6319

## Additional Resources

- Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Educ. (2013), [Guidance for Massachusetts Public Schools Creating a Safe and Supportive School Environment: Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity](#).
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# Medical Procedures and Policies

## Medication

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Scholars may not carry medication on their person at any time except for inhalers, EpiPens, insulin/ glucagon and prescription enzymes for Cystic Fibrosis. Middle school scholars may carry and self-administer epi-pens, inhalers, and insulin only after Massachusetts state requirements have been satisfied. These requirements include:

1. Obtaining a physician's order specifying that the scholar may self-administer the medication.
2. Attending a brief meeting of the scholar, parent, and nurse, for the purpose of dropping off a backup supply of the medication and completing the self-administration contract.

If your child will be receiving medication from the nurse:

1. A physician's order for the medication must be on file, and a consent form must be signed by a parent or guardian. This is required for prescription and/or over-the-counter medications.
2. A responsible adult must bring the medication into school and give it directly to the nurse. All medications must be in the original container.

## Medical Exclusions

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If your child is vomiting or has diarrhea or an unexplained rash, please keep him or her home to prevent the spread of a contagious illness throughout the school community. A fever of 100 degrees F. or greater usually means the scholar is contagious. Families should contact their provider to report symptoms. Scholars must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of Ibuprofen or Acetaminophen with clearance from a medical professional before returning to school.

A doctor's note must be on file for any scholar with an illness or injury which prevents him/her from participating in school activities. Also, a doctor's note is required if a scholar is absent from school for more than three consecutive days.

## Physical Exam Forms

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According to Massachusetts Law, 7th-grade scholars must have a recent (one-year-old or less) physical exam form on file. If your 7<sup>th</sup> grader hasn't had a physical in the last year, please schedule one with his/her physician as soon as possible and forward the completed form to the health office.

## Overnight Fieldwork Medication Policy

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Please note the following requirements regarding medication on overnight fieldwork. If you have any questions, please call the nurse at (508) 879-9000, ext. 156.

- A physician's order is required for all medications including over-the-counter medications, herbal preparations or vitamins.
- All physician's orders must be received by the Nurse ONE WEEK PRIOR to the fieldwork.
- All medications must be delivered directly to the Nurse by a responsible adult AT LEAST TWO DAYS PRIOR to the trip date during school hours. Please deliver only the amount of medication needed for the trip. MEDICATION WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED ON THE DAY OF DEPARTURE.
- All medication must be in its original container, clearly labeled with the scholar's name.

At no time is the scholar allowed to carry or administer his/her own medication, including over-the-counter medications, herbal preparations or vitamins. The only exceptions to this are scholars who have prior authorization to self-administer epi-pens, inhalers, insulin.

## School Wellness Policy

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The Board of Trustees recognizes the relationship between student well-being, health and wellness, and student achievement as well as the importance of comprehensive wellness policies. The Board of Trustees is committed to protecting children's health, well-being and ability to learn to their fullest potential by supporting a school environment that promotes healthy choices and fosters lifelong habits with respect to eating and physical activity.

Therefore, the Board of Trustees has adopted this policy to serve as a guideline for carrying out McAuliffe's objectives in this arena.

### A. Wellness Advisory Committee ("WAC")

#### 1. Purpose

The purpose of the WAC is to ensure that the Christa McAuliffe Charter School (McAuliffe) has an established group of school staff and concerned community representatives to recommend, review, and help implement policies addressing school nutrition, nutrition education, physical activity, and related issues that affect student health.

#### 2. Scope and Application

##### a. Establishment

- The WAC shall encourage the development of a program that actively promotes wellness in McAuliffe and to maximize McAuliffe's opportunities for grant awards.
- School administration shall appoint committee members, including a designee to serve as a liaison between the WAC and school administration, and ensure the active functioning of the WAC.
- The WAC shall include representatives from a wide range of school health and health-related disciplines, including school nurse, wellness teacher, counselors, community agencies serving youth, parents, students, and members of the Board of Trustees.
  - Appointees to the maximum extent possible shall reflect the cultural, linguistic, and ethnic composition of the community.
  - To the extent feasible, appointees shall include representatives of local boards of health, school physicians, and local health care providers, such as hospitals and primary care providers.
  - The WAC shall be advisory to the Board of Trustees.
- The WAC shall meet at least four times a year.
- A full assessment of the WAC will be conducted at least once every 3 years and the result of this assessment will be made available to the public.
- WAC reports, as well as minutes of the meetings, including the names of attendees, shall be maintained and shall be provided to the Department of Public Health or the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education upon request.

##### b. WAC Functions

- The WAC on an annual basis shall recommend and/or review McAuliffe's policies to promote student wellness, such as those addressing health education and services, school nutrition, the nutrition environment, physical education, and opportunities for physical activity around the school environment. Such policies shall include:

- goals and objectives for the coming year, which shall be observable and measurable;
  - a process for evaluating the progress to be made in the coming year in reaching the annual goals and objectives, which may include the use by McAuliffe of a self-assessment tool;
  - any recommendations concerning the establishment or functioning of wellness teams and initiatives.
- The WAC on an annual basis shall propose to school administration and the Board of Trustees a copy of the policies developed, including goals and objectives for the coming year. The report shall include:
    - an action plan which details ways in which the WAC may work with school personnel, including school nurses, to achieve the annual goals and objectives;
    - ways that McAuliffe and the WAC might best monitor and evaluate progress toward reaching the annual goals and objectives;
    - ways of developing community support for school wellness initiatives and coordinating school and community initiatives on physical activity and nutrition;
    - an assessment of the accomplishments of the previous year and identification of work still needed in order to accomplish the previous year's goals and objectives; and
    - a review of membership and membership participation in the previous year and, as appropriate, a request to school administration for replacements.
  - In setting goals and objectives, the WAC shall consider:
    - suggestions and recommendations from students, parents, teachers, school nurses, school administrators, nutrition, and physical education staff and other interested parties;
    - input from all those affected by the goals or objectives, to the maximum extent feasible; and
    - general public health data, such as
      - student health needs assessments;
      - assessments and indicators of student health status and health awareness;
      - information from health providers and public health officials as to causes of morbidity and mortality and possible methods of prevention; and
      - data indicating the effect of health status on academic performance.
  - information about current programs and practices that might have a bearing on student health, such as:
    - BMI screening data;
    - COVID-19 testing data
    - status of food nutrition and nutrition education programs, and food consumption patterns, including breakfast and lunch program participation;
    - meaningful opportunities for physical activity, including the amount of time and the quality of the opportunities provided for physical activity through physical education, recess and travel to and from school; and
    - status of current school health and behavioral health services and health education programs.

## **B. Development of Guidelines**

Upon adoption of Wellness policies, school administration, in consultation with the WAC will develop implementation procedures. School administration will review the policies and related implementation procedures and share expectations with staff on an annual basis to ensure implementation and adherence.

## **C. Nutrition**

McAuliffe will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students and will provide clean, safe and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat. Only food and beverages that meet the school nutrition standards and that are served by our food vendor will be promoted and marketed. See the breakfast and lunch section of the family handbook for more information.

**D. Wellness Class and Physical Activities**

McAuliffe's goal is that all students will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis throughout the school day through wellness classes, and after school through enrichment activities, interscholastic athletics, active transportation (walking and biking to school) and physical activity integrated into the academic curriculum where appropriate. Additionally, there will be daily recess periods with active play. **All previously mentioned activities will follow COVID safety guidelines and only be permitted if guidelines can feasibly be adhered to.**

- The Wellness and Athletics departments will provide all students, including students with disabilities and special health care needs with access to a variety of opportunities for physical activity. Activities will:
  - Adhere to or exceed the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework and the National Association for Sport and Physical Education Standards;
  - Ensure that students learn skills for lifelong activities; and
  - Provide students with the opportunity to participate in physical activity through a range of programs including but not limited to, interscholastic athletics and clubs that involve physical activity.
- The school will ensure that the school's wellness curriculum is taught by a qualified educator who is certified by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to teach physical education. In addition, as part of a quality physical education program, the wellness teacher is expected to participate regularly in professional development activities.
- Students will not be kept from a Wellness class except if the removal is necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the student, other students and staff or the permission of the student's parent/guardian has been given for the student's removal or exclusion.
- All McAuliffe students will have 20 minutes of recess actively supervised, preferably outdoors, during which the school will encourage physical activity through the provision of space and equipment. Recess structure and expectations will also be altered to adhere to COVID safety guidelines until they are lifted.

**E. Health and Nutrition Education****McAuliffe's goals for health education activities:**

- Students will receive encouragement, support, and education to adopt and maintain healthy behaviors through health education, including nutrition education and social-emotional learning.
- Students receive health education, through Wellness curriculum, which teaches the skills they need to adopt and maintain healthy behaviors.
- Students receive consistent health messages from all aspects of the school program.
- Health education curriculum standards and guidelines address both nutrition and physical education.
- Nutrition is integrated into the Wellness curriculum. Staff who provide health and nutrition education will have appropriate training.
- Health and nutrition curriculum will be aligned to the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework, National Health Education Standards, and the National Sexuality Education Standards and will establish linkages between health education, school meal programs and related community services.

## Management of Life Threatening Allergies<sup>14</sup>

[Introduction](#)

[Guidelines for Managing Life Threatening Allergies](#)

[Responsibilities of the Student](#)

[Responsibilities of the Parents/Guardians](#)

[Responsibilities of the School Administration](#)

<sup>14</sup> This policy was revised during July 2015 and voted for adoption by McAuliffe's Board of Trustees on July 21, 2015.

[Responsibilities of the School Nurse](#)

[Responsibilities of the Teacher/Specialist](#)

[Responsibilities of the Food Service Personnel](#)

[Responsibilities of the School Bus Company](#)

[Responsibilities of After School Enrichment Coordinator & Athletic Director](#)

[Responsibilities of Business & Operations](#)

[Physical Activity and Recess](#)

[Fieldwork](#)

[Resources](#)

## Introduction

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Christa McAuliffe Charter School (McAuliffe) recognizes that students with life-threatening allergies (LTA) require reasonable accommodations necessary to ensure access to available education and education-related benefits. It is the policy of McAuliffe that the management of LTA be accomplished in compliance with applicable state and federal guidelines, particularly the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education document "Managing Life-Threatening Food Allergies in Schools."

McAuliffe cannot guarantee an allergen-free environment for all students with LTA. Our goal is to minimize the risk to students with LTA. This policy and state guidelines will help to ensure that the health needs of all students will be met in the least restrictive environment. These guidelines include building-based plans, training programs for personnel, implementation of Individual Care Plans (ICP), medical forms, and additional accommodations as necessary.

The success of McAuliffe in meeting the needs of students with life-threatening allergies requires the diligence and cooperation of all parties, including students and parents. The specific guidelines and procedures accompanying this policy are intended to provide a framework for that cooperation, which is then individualized to the needs of each student. They are intended to ensure the best outcomes for students.

The School's Administration and Board of Trustees shall be responsible for the routine review of this policy.

## Guidelines for Managing Life Threatening Allergies

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### Responsibilities of the Student

- Learn to avoid allergens in food and materials.
- Self-administer life saving medications, if physically able and developmentally ready.
- Do not trade or share foods.
- Wash hands before and after eating.
- Promptly inform an adult as soon as accidental exposure occurs or symptoms appear, if physically able.
- Maintain a relationship with the school nurse to assist in identifying issues related to the management of the life-threatening allergy in school.
- Parent/Guardian, Physician, and School Nurse must all agree when the student is developmentally ready to carry all life-saving medications.
- Consider wearing medic-alert identification.
- Report bullying, teasing, and threats to an adult authority.

### Responsibilities of the Parents/Guardians

- Notify the school of your child's allergy immediately after diagnosis and prior to the start of each school year.
- Provide all after-school activities, programs, athletics, etc. all relevant information regarding your child's LTA. Be aware that the school nurse does not share health information with individuals working with children after school hours. The nurse is in the school building beginning 10 minutes before the start of school each day until one half-hour after the close of school each day. When the nurse is not in the building, the nurse's office is secured and there is no access to information, equipment or supplies.

- Participate in developing an Individual Care Plan (ICP).
- Consider providing photos of your child to all teachers, nurse, food service personnel and any others who may come into contact with your child.
- Ensure your child's knowledge and ability in the self-management of his or her allergy as developmentally appropriate.
- Consider providing medical alert identification for your child.
- Due to the serious nature of allergies, it is critical that parents provide the school nurse with all up-to-date life-saving medications and medication orders from the licensed provider within the first week of school.
- A parent or guardian of a student with food allergies is responsible for providing classroom snacks for his/her own child.
- When possible, make arrangements to be on field work.
- Provide the school nurse with the licensed provider's statement if the student no longer has allergies.
- Request student information and photo be posted in the kitchen if desired.
- Notify the school and the bus company if your child will be carrying an epinephrine auto-injector on a bus.

### **Responsibilities of the School Administration**

- Include in the school's emergency response plan a written plan outlining emergency procedures for managing life-threatening allergic reactions.
- Provide yearly training and education for all faculty and staff regarding:
  - Food, insect stings, medications, latex, and other LTAs.
  - Risk reduction procedures.
  - Emergency procedures.
  - How to administer an epinephrine auto-injector in an emergency.
- As soon as class list is determined prior to beginning of school year:
  - Notify corresponding teachers that their classroom will have a student with an LTA.
  - If ICP indicates that the classroom needs special cleaning, ensure that it is completed prior to the start of the school year.
- Ensure that special training for food service personnel occurs.
- Provide emergency communication devices (two-way radio, intercom, walkie-talkie, cell phone) for all school activities, including transportation, that involve a student with life-threatening allergies.
- Ensure that a full-time nurse is available in the school.
- Inform parents/guardians as soon as a student experiences an allergic reaction at school.
- Ensure that all teachers of a student with an LTA are trained to administer an epinephrine auto-injector.
- To help promote understanding and cooperation from parents/guardians and students without LTAs, use large assemblies such as orientation and open house to discuss the existence of students with LTAs and the policy in place to handle this.
- Ensure awareness of students with LTAs in planning for all school-wide events.
- Ensure that non-latex products are provided in a classroom where a student with a latex allergy has been assigned.
- Ensure that federal and state regulations (such as HIPPA) are being followed.
- Ensure that a contingency plan is in place for substitute teachers, nurses, or food service personnel; Ensure that substitute teachers receive training regarding LTAs.

### **Responsibilities of the School Nurse**

- Immediately after the diagnosis of a life-threatening allergic condition, communicate or meet with the student's parents to develop an Individual Care Plan (ICP) for the student.
- Complete ICP including the student's name, photo (if permitted), allergens, symptoms of allergic reactions, risk reduction procedures, emergency procedures, and required signatures.
- Familiarize teachers with the Individual Care Plans of their students by the opening of school, or as soon as the plans are written. All other staff members who have contact with students with LTAs should be familiar with their ICPs.

- During annual training and education, instruct staff regarding the Life Threatening Allergy Policy and direct them to online access.
- Ensure that all staff is aware of location of the binder that contains:
  - Individual Care Plans
  - Life-saving medications
- When medications are provided at the beginning of school year, ensure that they will not expire during the year. If they will expire during the school year, ask the parents to make arrangements for them to be current.
- Ensure there is a contingency plan in place in the case of a substitute nurse.
- After an anaphylactic reaction occurs, plan for the student's re-entry into school. Coordinate with teachers, parents and any other necessary school staff.
- Communicate with parents after any allergy concerns occur during the school day.

### **Responsibilities of the Teacher/Specialist**

- Obtain and review with the school nurse all ICPs pertaining to students in your classroom with LTAs.
- In the event of an allergic reaction (where there is no known allergic history) the school nurse should be called and the school's Emergency Response Plan activated. Emergency medical services should be called immediately.
- Ensure that the classroom has a functioning communication device for direct contact with the school nurse.
- Information about students' food allergies should be kept in the classroom. These foods should not be used for class projects, parties, holidays and celebrations, arts, crafts, science experiments, cooking, snacks, or other purposes.
- The school will communicate the existence of LTA within the classroom to all parents and students so that safe snacks can be packed.
- If a student inadvertently brings a snack that may trigger an allergic reaction, he/she will not be allowed to eat that snack in the classroom.
- For incentives/rewards, non-food items should be used instead of candy.
- Participate in education and training regarding LTAs.
- Keep all necessary documents regarding LTAs accessible.
- Ensure that all student teachers, aides, specialists and substitute teachers are informed of the students with LTA and necessary safeguards.
- For substitute teachers, provide necessary information identifying all students with LTAs.
- Respond immediately to every symptom or sign as a possible allergic reaction.
- When a reaction occurs, the student should be accompanied by an adult to the school nurse.
- Participate in planning for student's re-entry to school after an anaphylactic reaction.
- When a student with a latex allergy has been assigned to the classroom, notify all other students to bring in only non-latex school supplies.
- Whenever possible, unscreened windows and doors will remain closed, especially during the seasons when insects are prevalent.
- If a bee/wasp gets in the classroom, immediately remove the student with this allergy from the room.
- Snacks:
  - Communicate with parents of students with LTAs to determine snack protocol.
  - When a protocol is determined, educate all other parents about the presence and needs of the students with LTAs.
- Classroom Activities:
  - Do not use food for rewards or any classroom activities or celebrations, unless permission is granted by parents/guardians of the students with LTA.
  - In advance, advise the parents of students with LTAs of all special classroom events and activities to be sure there are no allergens in the materials used.
- Field Work/School Trips:
  - Ensure that all life-saving medications and instructions are taken on field work or school trips.
  - Students with LTAs should be assigned to those who are trained in recognizing symptoms of life-threatening reactions, how to use an epinephrine auto-injector and emergency procedures.
  - Ensure that a functioning communication device is taken on field work or school trips.

- Review plans for field work and school trips; avoid high risk places. Consider eating situations and bee/wasp season. Plan for prevention of exposure to the student's LTA.
- Know where the closest medical facilities are located and if 911 is available in that area. Provide phone numbers for closest police/fire/ems to all chaperones and school nurse.
- Invite parents/guardians of students with LTAs to accompany their child on school trips, in addition to the chaperone. However, the student's safety or attendance must not be conditioned on the parent's presence.

### **Responsibilities of the Food Service Personnel**

- If requested by parents, attend the team meeting to discuss accommodations for the student with LTA.
- Post the student's allergy information at request of the parents.
- Read all food labels and recheck routinely for potential food allergens so accurate ingredient information can be communicated with parents.
- Review and follow sound food handling practices and cleaning and sanitation protocol to avoid cross-contamination.
- Food service staff will use only non-latex gloves.

### **Responsibilities of the School Bus Company**

- Provide a functioning communication device.
- Enforce policy of no food eating on school buses - for drivers and students.
- With parental permission, school bus drivers will be provided with the ICP.

### **Responsibilities of After School Enrichment Coordinator & Athletics Liaison**

- Ensure that all teachers and coaching staff receive education and training regarding LTAs.
- With parent's consent, coaches will keep a copy of allergy information for all students with LTAs.
- Ensure that a functioning communication device is present at all athletic events where students with LTAs are present.

### **Responsibilities of Business & Operations**

- Provide cleaning materials for students to use to clean tables following each lunch sitting.
- Ensure that all custodial staff will clean all surfaces where food has been present with appropriate cleaning methods and materials.
- Provide access to soap and cleaning solution ingredients.
- Custodial staff will use only non-latex gloves and products.
- Whenever possible, unscreened windows and doors will remain closed, especially during the seasons when insects are prevalent.
- Routinely check for presence of bees and wasps, especially nesting areas, and arrange for their removal.
- Inform custodial staff if a classroom with students with LTA has been rented or used for a special occasion so that proper cleaning can take place following rental.

### **Physical Activity and Recess**

- Teachers and staff responsible for leading physical activities (Adventure, Wellness) or recess will be trained to recognize and respond to exercise-induced anaphylaxis, as well as anaphylaxis caused by other allergens.
- Staff on recess duty or in the Adventure Center will have a communication method (walkie talkie, intercom, or cell phone) for emergency communication.
- If for safety reasons medical alert identification (i.e. ID bracelet) needs to be removed during specific activities, the student should be reminded to replace this identification immediately after the activity is completed.

### **Fieldwork**

- Field work should be chosen carefully so that no student is excluded from a field trip due to risk of allergen exposure. The school nurse will help evaluate the appropriateness of each field work with consideration to the safety of the student with LTAs.
- Protocols for field work planning include timely notification to the nurse.

- Whenever students travel on field work for school, the name and phone number of the nearest hospital will be part of the chaperone's emergency plan.
- Medications including epinephrine auto-injector and a copy of the student's ICP must accompany the student.
- A cell phone or other communication device must be available on the trip for emergency calls.
- Parents of a student at risk for anaphylaxis should be invited to accompany their child on fieldwork, in addition to the chaperone.
- In the absence of accompanying parents/guardian or nurse, another individual must be trained and assigned the task of watching out for the student's welfare and for handling any emergency. The adult carrying the epinephrine should be identified and introduced to the student as well as the other chaperones.
- Hand wipes should be used by students and staff after consuming food.

## Resources

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The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education publishes guidelines for Managing Life Threatening Food Allergies in Schools.

"Development of these guidelines was a result of a collaborative effort of the Massachusetts Department of Education, the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America Foundation: New England Chapter, the Massachusetts School Nurse Organization, the Massachusetts Food Service Association, the Massachusetts Committee of School Physicians, and parents of children with food allergies. Information and advice on this project was provided by the School Health Unit of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health." - Managing Life Threatening Food Allergies in Schools, p1.

# Head Injuries and Concussion Policy & Procedures

## Policy for the Prevention and Management of Head Injuries and Concussions in School and Extracurricular Athletic Activities

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### Introduction

Christa McAuliffe Charter School (McAuliffe) seeks to prevent concussion and provide a safe return to activity for all students after an injury, particularly after a head injury. In order to effectively and consistently manage these injuries, the School abides by the following procedures that have been developed to aid in ensuring that concussed athletes are identified, treated and referred appropriately, receive appropriate follow-up medical care during the school day, including academic assistance, and are fully recovered prior to returning to athletic activity.

### Responsibility

McAuliffe has designated its Director of Business, and Operations & and Director of Student Services as the school leaders with administrative authority to oversee the implementation of these policies and protocols governing the prevention and management of sports-related head injuries. Specifically, these leaders will be responsible for:

1. Supporting and enforcing the protocols, documentation, training and reporting outlined in this policy.
2. Supervising and reviewing that all documentation is in place.
3. Reviewing, updating and implementing policy every two years and including updates in annual training and student and parent handbooks.

### Training Program

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires annual safety training on sports-related concussion, including second impact syndrome, for coaches, certified athletic trainers, trainers, volunteers, school nurses, school and team physicians, directors responsible for a school marching band whether employed by a school or serving as a volunteer, parent or legal guardian of a child who participates in an extracurricular athletic activity.

- A. At McAuliffe, the following persons shall complete annually one of the head injury safety programs approved by The Massachusetts Department of Public Health:
  - 1. Athletics Liaison
  - 2. Coaches
  - 3. Volunteers
  - 4. School nurse(s)
  - 5. Certified Athletic Trainers
  - 6. Trainers
  - 7. Directors responsible for the marching band (if the school has one)
  
- B. Parents of extracurricular athletes and extracurricular athletes must be provided annually with verbal and written information regarding concussions.
  - 1. If information is provided at a meeting, the attendance roster will serve as a record of verification.
  - 2. If parents do not attend the meeting, they may complete an online course and submit a certificate of completion OR they may review Massachusetts Department of Public Health approved materials (provided by the school) and sign a verification form that they have read and understood these materials.
  
- C. The required training applies to one school year and must be repeated for every subsequent year.
  
- D. The Athletics Liaison or Nurse shall maintain records of completion of annual training for all persons specified above through:
  - 1. Certificates of completion.
  - 2. Attendance records from trainings.
  - 3. Signed verification that the individual has read and understands the approved materials.
  - 4. Game officials shall complete one of the approved training programs and shall provide independent verification of completion of the training requirements to schools upon request.

**Pre-participation for the Student Athlete and Families**

- 1. Each student athlete must have a physical examination on an annual basis, within 13 months of the student's last physical exam (to allow for insurance coverage of the examination). Any student athlete who does not have a current physical on file with the nurse, prior to the first day of tryouts/practice, is not eligible until a new/updated physical is turned in. If the student's physical examination expires during the sports season, he/she must have an updated physical examination to continue to participate in the sports season. All physicals are to be turned in to the nurse, not the coach. This medical examination should be completed by a physician, nurse practitioner, etc. and should authorize that the student is medically cleared to participate in physical activity.
- 2. Attendance at pre-season team meeting where concussions are discussed or completion of online course and submission of certificate of completion to the school nurse or athletics liaison.
- 3. Prior to tryouts, each student and their parent or guardian must complete the Pre-participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form. This form can be obtained from the coach, completed and returned to the coach before the start of try-outs. The form can be returned in person, by mail or fax (508-471-3135). The student cannot participate in the extracurricular sports activity until the pre-participation form is completed, signed and returned to the coach.

The decision to allow a player who reported a history of multiple concussion on her/his pre-participation form should be made only after consultation with the student's physician or primary care provider, the sports medicine or concussion specialist, if involved, the neuropsychologist, if involved, and the appropriate school athletic staff and the parent. Current evidence indicates that youth who have suffered one or more concussions are more likely to suffer a subsequent one. Options may include switching positions, limiting contact in practices, or changing sports altogether to minimize the

risk of reinjury. The focus of McAuliffe will always be on protecting the health and safety of the student and avoiding long-term consequences that can occur from repeated concussions.

### **Pre-participation for the School**

1. The Coach will ensure each extracurricular sports participant has a current physical and forward physicals to school nurse.
2. The Athletic Director reviews the Pre-Participation Head Injury/Concussion Form For Extracurricular Activities.
3. The School Nurse will be responsible for:
  - a. Reviewing pre-participation forms.
  - b. Communicating with the coach regarding the student's concussion history and discussing concerns.
  - c. Following up with parents and students as needed prior to the student's participation in extracurricular athletic activities.
4. McAuliffe may use a student's history of head injury or concussion as a factor to determine whether to allow the student to participate in an extracurricular athletic activity or whether to allow such participation under specific conditions or modifications.

### **Head Injuries Occurring During the Season**

The following procedures will be followed when an athlete receives a head injury:

1. Any student, who during a practice or competition, sustains a head injury or suspected concussion, or exhibits any signs or symptoms of a concussion, will be removed from the practice or competition that day.
2. The student will not return to play until the student has been cleared to do so.
3. If the student is able to be sent home (rather than directly to the MD):
  - a. the coach will ensure that the athlete will be with a responsible adult, who is capable of monitoring the athlete and understanding the home care instructions, before allowing the athlete to go home.
  - b. the coach will communicate the nature of the injury directly to the parent either in person or by phone immediately after the competition or practice.
  - c. written information about signs and symptoms of concussion will be sent home with the parent.
  - d. if there is any question about the status of the student, or the student is not able to be monitored appropriately, the student will be referred to the emergency department for evaluation. A coach will accompany the athlete and remain with the athlete until the parents arrive.
4. Athletic Trainer (if school has one) or the coach completes the Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form.
5. The athletic trainer/coach will give the Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form to the school nurse.
6. The school nurse will review the Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form.
7. School nurse will notify the School Leaders, Teachers and Guidance Counselor.
8. School nurse will follow-up with the parents/guardians of the athlete.
9. School nurse will assist teachers with accommodations as needed.

### **Medical Clearance for Return to Play**

All student athletes at McAuliffe must be cleared to return to play/practice by a licensed medical professional after the graduated return to play has been completed (see below). It is recommended that this medical professional have familiarity with concussion diagnosis and management in order to determine how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for the student to return to normal activities including physical activity and school activities (requiring concentration and learning). The following should be in place before returning to physical activities (sports, including practices and games, and physical education classes):

1. The student should be completely symptom free at rest, with physical exertion and with cognitive exertion.
2. Return to play should be gradual.
3. Students should be monitored for symptoms and cognitive function during each stage of exertion.
4. Students should only progress to the next level of exertion if they are asymptomatic at the current level.

Medical clearance should be provided using the Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form which can be obtained from the school nurse. It is recommended that the student take this form to the medical professional at the time of exam. These completed forms will be returned to the coach and shared with the school nurse for review and a copy will be kept in the student's medical record.

In a situation in which a student has been medically cleared but school staff have observed continuing symptoms, the school will make the final decision regarding a student's return to play. If this situation arises, the McAuliffe staff should communicate to the health care provider who provided the clearance regarding the symptoms which school staff have observed, to allow for re-evaluation by the health care provider. It is possible that the health care provider was not aware of the student's symptoms when the provider gave the clearance. If the athlete still has symptoms, the athlete should NOT return to play.

### **Development and Implementation of Post Concussion Graduated Reentry Plans**

McAuliffe requires that all students returning to school and athletics after a concussion have a written plan for reentry. School staff, such as teachers, school nurses, counselors, administrators, speech-language pathologists, coaches and others should work together to develop and implement this plan in coordination with the student, their parent/guardian and the health care provider.

Graduated return to academic plans are based on the stages of recovery framework that takes a student from rest to gradual return to full participation in academic activities.

### **Stages of Recovery**

The Stages of Recovery are a framework designed through a collaborative effort by local health care professionals. The purpose of this framework is to create a common language that will help guide students, families, school personnel and health professionals through the recuperation process. Placement in stages is based on assessment of the student's medical condition by a licensed medical professional and accompanied by written orders.

1. Red Stage (Usually 2-4 days, but could last weeks)
  - Rest
  - Students typically do not attend school
2. Orange Stage
  - Rest
  - Attend school half to full days
  - Avoid school bus and heavy backpacks
  - Work with designated educational personnel regarding school accommodations
  - No tests in school
  - No sports, band, chorus, physical education or outdoor recess
3. Yellow Stage
  - Attend school full-time if possible
  - Students and families work with teachers regarding homework deadlines (complete as much as possible)
  - See school nurse for pain management and/or rest if needed
  - Limit one quiz/test per day (untimed testing is recommended)
  - Work in 15 minute blocks
  - No sports
  - Licensed medical professional will make decisions regarding band, chorus, physical education and outdoor recess based on medical assessment
4. Green Stage
  - Attend school full-time
  - Resume normal activities
  - Resume sports once school work is back on track, student is symptom-free, and has been cleared by a licensed medical professional

Graduated return to athletic play will begin only after a student has returned to full participation in academics and is completely symptom-free at rest.

### **Return to Play Schedule**

When a student athlete is completely symptom-free at rest and has the approval of a medical professional, she/he may begin a graduated return to play protocol. The return to play schedule for the student should proceed as follows:

- Step 1: Light exercise, including walking or riding an exercise bike. No weight lifting.
- Step 2: Aerobic exercise such as running in the gym or on the field. No helmet or other equipment.
- Step 3: Non-contact training drills in full equipment. Weight training can begin.
- Step 4: Full-contact controlled training followed by practice or training.
- Step 5: Full-contact game play.

The written reentry plans will be signed by the student athlete, the parent/guardian, the school nurse, the lead teacher/guidance counselor and the coach so that all parties are in agreement. Frequent re-assessments as appropriate may be necessary. A copy of the plan will be kept in the student's medical record.

### **Communicating with Parents with Limited English Proficiency**

McAuliffe makes every attempt to communicate effectively with parents with limited English proficiency. The school has the required forms available in Spanish and Portuguese. If explanations of the policy are needed in a language other than English, the School will provide translations. In the event a student receives a concussion or is suspected of having a concussion, the coach should notify the parent in the appropriate language. The school's bilingual outreach coordinator will assist in communication efforts.

### **Outreach to Parents for Form and Training Completion**

Student Athletes at McAuliffe will not be permitted to participate in extracurricular sports until both the parent and student have completed and returned the signed Pre-Participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form before the start of every sports season. In the event the school has not received the form or other required forms, including documentation of an annual physical examination and documentation that both parent/guardian have completed the required annual training, the School will make three attempts to contact parent using the school's typical communication methods to parents (email, telephone, US mail). The student athlete WILL NOT be allowed to play or practice until the appropriate required signed and completed forms are returned to the School.

### **Sharing Concussion-Related Health Information**

Informal collaboration occurs on a temporary, as-needed basis for information exchange, as when the school nurse informs (while adhering to protocols for confidentiality) the Adventure teacher that a particular student may not participate in physical activities because of a recent injury. There may be circumstances in which there is a need to share information in the student health record with authorized school personnel - either to enhance the educational progress of the student or protect his/her safety or well-being. For example, staff may need to be alerted on a need to know basis and offered a course of action. This type of disclosure should be made only to those authorized school personnel who work directly with the student in an instructive (academic or physical), administrative, or diagnostic capacity. Finally, authorized school personnel should be instructed not to re-disclose the information.

If there is any question about the sensitivity of the information, the school nurse should seek the permission of the parent/guardian and the student, if appropriate, prior to disclosure to authorized school personnel. Ultimately, however, federal regulations permit information in the student health record to be seen by authorized school personnel on a need to know basis, and the basis for such sharing seems even more compelling when necessary to protect the wellbeing or safety of the student.

There may be times when a school nurse has the legal obligation to disclose health or related information to protect a student's health or safety. Public policy requires the protection of a patient's right to privacy by medical professionals, unless there is an immediate threat or serious harm to the student or others.

### **Responsibilities of Coaches**

1. Coaches are responsible for:
  - a. Completing the annual training and submitting the completion certificate to School Nurse.
  - b. Meeting with parents / guardians of student athletes prior to the season and providing them with information about head injuries and forms that need to be completed and submitted.
  - c. Reviewing Pre-Participation Forms to identify those athletes who are at greater risk for repeated head injuries and forwarding the forms to the school nurse.
  - d. Completing a Report of Head Injury Form upon identification of a student with a head injury or suspected concussion that occurs during practice or competition.
  - e. Receiving, reviewing and forwarding to the School Nurse forms that are completed by a parent which report a head injury during the sports season, but outside of an extracurricular athletic activity so as to identify those athletes who are at greater risk for repeated head injuries.
  - f. Discouraging and prohibiting athletes from engaging in any unreasonably dangerous athletic technique.
  - g. Identifying athletes with head injuries or suspected concussions that occur in practice or competition and removing them from play.
  - h. Communicating promptly with parents/guardians of any student removed from practice or competition for head injury.

### **Responsibilities of the School Nurse**

1. The School Nurse will participate in the development and biannual review of the policies and procedures required by 105 CMR 201.000 (Concussion law) and management of sports-related injuries within the school.
2. Complete the annual training.
3. If there is no Athletic Director, the School Nurse will be responsible for:
  - a. Ensuring the training requirements for staff, parents, volunteers, coaches and students are met, recorded, and records are maintained as required.
  - b. Ensuring that all students meet the physical examination requirements prior to participation in any extracurricular activity.
  - c. Ensuring that all students participating in extracurricular athletic activities have completed and submitted Pre-Participation Forms, prior to participation each season.
  - d. Ensuring that the Report of Head Injury Forms are completed by the coach or parent and reviewed by the coach, school nurse, and trainer (if on staff) in a timely manner.
  - e. Reporting annual statistics to the Department of Public Health as required.
4. Reviewing completed Pre-Participation forms that indicate a history of head injury and following up with parents as needed prior to participation in extracurricular athletic activities.
5. Reviewing Report of Head Injury Forms and following up with the coach and parent as needed.
6. Maintaining:
  - a. Current physicals
  - b. Pre-participation forms
  - c. Report of Head Injury Forms
7. Participating in the graduated reentry planning for students who have been diagnosed with a concussion to discuss any necessary accommodations or modifications with respect to academics, course requirements, homework, testing, scheduling and other aspects of school activities consistent with a graduated reentry plan for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities after a head injury and revising the health care plan as needed.
8. Monitoring recuperating students with head injuries and collaborating with teachers to ensure that the graduated reentry plan for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities.
9. Providing ongoing educational materials on head injury and concussion to teachers, staff, students and families.

### **Responsibilities of the 504 Coordinator**

The school's 504 Coordinator will develop a 504 plan, as needed, pertaining to accommodations that the student requires as he/she is recovering from a head injury. He/she will maintain communication with the nurse, family, and

teachers to ensure the student is able to make as much academic progress as possible without hindering the healing process.

### Record Maintenance

The School will maintain the following records for three years or at a minimum until the student graduates:

1. Verifications of completion of annual training and receipt of materials.
2. Department Pre-Participation Forms.
3. Department Report of Head Injury Forms.
4. Department Medical Clearance and Authorization Forms.
5. Graduated Reentry plans for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities.

The School will make these records available to the Department of Public Health and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, upon request or in connection with any inspection or program review.

## Home and Hospital Services

### Practices and Procedures

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Students who must be absent from school or remain in the hospital for medical reasons will be provided with educational services in the home or hospital. To be eligible for these services, students need to have a physician's written order and to be in the home or hospital for a period not less than fourteen school days in any school year. To obtain home or hospital services, parents should contact the Director of Student Services and provide the necessary written documentation from the physician. Such educational services shall not be considered special education unless the student has been determined eligible for such services and the services include requirements of the student's IEP.

Upon communication from a student's parent/guardian and receipt of physician's written orders, school personnel will work with the family and hospital to arrange tutoring or other educational services. The goal of the school is to expedite the tutoring arrangement in order to allow the student to continue his or her educational program with as little disruption as possible, so long as the services do not interfere with the medical needs of the student.

### Question and Answer Guide on the Implementation of Educational Services in the Home or Hospital

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The following questions and answers prepared by the DESE Program Quality Assurance Services articulate important information about Home and Hospital Services per 603 CMR 28.03(3)(c) and 28.04(4). The information can also be accessed via the following hyperlink: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/prs/ta/hhep-qa.html>

#### 1) What is the Intent of the Massachusetts Regulations on Educational Services in the Home or Hospital?

The Massachusetts regulation requiring educational services in the home or hospital is 603 CMR 28.03(3)(c). It reads as follows:

Upon receipt of a physician's written order verifying that any student enrolled in a public school or placed by the public school in a private setting must remain at home or in a hospital on a day or overnight basis, or any combination of both, for medical reasons and for a period of not less than fourteen school days in any school year, the principal shall arrange for provision of educational services in the home or hospital. Such services shall be provided with sufficient frequency to allow the student to continue his or her educational program, as long as such services do not interfere with the medical needs of the student. The principal shall coordinate such services with the Administrator for Special Education for eligible students. Such educational services shall not be considered special education unless the student has been determined eligible for such services, and the services include services on the student's IEP.

The intent of this regulation on home or hospital instruction is to provide a student receiving a publicly funded education with the opportunity to make educational progress even when a physician determines that the student is physically unable to attend school. While it is impossible to replicate the total school experience through the provision of home/hospital instruction, a school district must provide, at a minimum, the instruction necessary to enable the student to keep up in his/her courses of study and minimize the educational loss that might occur during the period the student is confined at home or in a hospital.

Although the regulation on home/hospital instruction is included in the Special Education Regulations (603 CMR 28.00), home/hospital instruction is not considered "special education" unless the student has been found eligible for special education. In other words, home/hospital instruction typically is considered a regular education service, since it is in the interest of both the individual student and the school to make it possible for the student to keep up with schoolwork while s/he is unable to attend school for medical reasons.

The Special Education Regulations also include a provision relating specifically to students who are likely to be confined to home or hospital for medical reasons for more than 60 school days in any school year. Please see regulation 603 CMR 28.04(4), discussed in Question #4, below.

Please note that the requirements and guidance discussed in this Question and Answer Guide are separate and distinct from those relating to the approval of parent requests for "home education" or home schooling programs, which are governed by General Laws Chapter 76, § 1. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Home Education Advisory provides guidance on the Massachusetts law governing home schooling programs.

## **2) Who is Entitled to Educational Services in the Home or Hospital?**

**Public school students.** A public school student who, due to documented medical reasons, is confined to home or a hospital for not less than fourteen (14) school days during the school year, is entitled to receive home/hospital educational services as described under 603 CMR 28.03(3)(c). In this context "public school student" means a student who is enrolled in a public school district or a charter school, or a student who is being educated with public funds in an educational collaborative or an approved private day or residential special education school. (Please see Question #8, below, for more detail about students in approved private day and residential special education schools.) The requirement for a school district to provide home/hospital instruction to a public school student who is being educated at public expense is not dependent upon the student's eligibility for special education.

**Private school students.** A student who is enrolled in a private school at private expense ("private school student") is entitled to receive publicly-funded home/hospital instruction as a special education service if s/he has been found to be a student with a disability who requires special education. Mass. General Laws Chapter 71B, § 1 defines "school age child with a disability" as follows:

a school age child in a public or non-public school setting who, because of a disability consisting of a developmental delay or any intellectual, sensory, neurological, emotional, communication, physical, specific learning or health impairment or combination thereof, is unable to progress effectively in regular education and requires special education services, including a school age child who requires only a related service or related services if said service or services are required to ensure access of the child with a disability to the general education curriculum. G.L. Chapter 71B, § 1 (emphasis added).

A private school student who has been evaluated and has been found eligible for special education is entitled to receive home/hospital educational services as outlined in Question #9, below. For both public school students and private school students, the justification for any needed home or hospital instruction must be documented by a student's personal physician. A school district that receives a request for home instruction from someone other than a physician, or from a physician who is not personally responsible for a student's care, is not obligated to provide instruction under 603 CMR 28.03(3)(c). In this case, the responsible school district should inquire further with the student's parent or guardian to determine the student's status and any additional information or action that is needed. For example, the school district may need to proceed under the compulsory attendance law if it determines that a student between ages 6 and 16 is not

attending school, is not being otherwise educated in a manner approved by the school district, and is not medically unable to attend school.

Determining eligibility. As required under M.G.L. c. 71B, § 2, if a parent of a private school student requests an evaluation to determine the student's eligibility for special education and presents the school district with a physician's statement, then the school district must immediately review the physician's statement to determine if there is sufficient information available to consider if the student has a "health impairment" according to the definition provided under 603 CMR 28.02(7)(i). If there is sufficient information in the physician's statement, then the school district should convene the Team within 15 days to make an expedited determination of eligibility and begin provision of services. Please refer to [Administrative Advisory SPED 2003-1](#) for additional information about these requirements.

### **3) How Can Home or Hospital Education Services Be Accessed?**

Once the student's personal physician (for example, a pediatrician, internist, medical specialist or psychiatrist) determines that a student's medical condition will require either hospitalization or home care for not less than 14 school days, the physician must notify the school district responsible for the student in order to begin the home/hospital instruction process. The student's physician must complete a Department of Elementary and Secondary Education form 28R/3 (or equivalent signed statement) and submit it to the student's building principal or other appropriate program administrator. At a minimum the physician's signed notice must include information regarding:

- the date the student was admitted to a hospital or was confined to home;
- the medical reason(s) for the confinement;
- the expected duration of the confinement; and
- what medical needs of the student should be considered in planning the home or hospital education services.

Students with chronic illnesses who have recurring home/hospital stays of less than 14 consecutive school days, when such recurrences have added up to or are expected to add up to more than 14 school days in a school year, are also eligible for home or hospital educational services if they are requested and the medical need is documented by the physician.

Home and hospital educational services under 603 CMR 28.03(3)(c) must begin without undue delay after the school district receives written notice from the student's physician that such services are necessary. Please note that there is no required 14-day waiting period before home or hospital instruction can commence if it is likely that the student will be absent from the school-based program for 14 school days or more in the school year.

Whenever a student is likely to miss 14 school days or more for health-related reasons, the Department strongly recommends that the school district expedite the delivery of educational services as well as any evaluation or Team meetings that may be necessary, in order to minimize the negative impact on the student's educational progress.

### **4) What Requirements Apply if the Student is Likely to Be Confined to Home or a Hospital for More Than 60 School Days?**

If, in the judgment of the student's physician, a student with an IEP is likely to remain at home, in a hospital, or in a pediatric nursing home for medical reasons and for more than sixty (60) school days in any school year, the Administrator of Special Education is required, without undue delay, to convene a Team meeting to consider evaluation needs and, if appropriate, to amend the existing IEP or develop a new IEP suited to the student's unique circumstances. (See 603 CMR 28.04(4).) The Department recommends that the Administrator of Special Education convene the Team meeting within 10 school days after the school district is notified that the student is likely to remain at home or in the hospital for more than sixty days. This provision applies to all eligible students, including private school students who have been determined to need special education.

### **5) How Should Home or Hospital Services Be Delivered?**

School districts may provide home/hospital services in a number of ways, including:

- providing the services directly to the student using district employees;
- contracting with the hospital to provide the needed services;

- contracting with another school district to provide the services; or
- contracting with another agency to provide the services.

Home/hospital instruction is typically one-to-one or small group instruction that is provided on an individualized schedule, for less than a full school day or a full school week. The school district should determine the number of instructional hours per day or per week based on the educational and medical needs of the individual student. School districts may not preset the number of instructional hours per week provided to students who must remain at home or in the hospital; the decision must be individualized. Based on the student's medical status, the student's physician may determine that the number of instructional hours should be reduced. In addition, the amount of instructional time deemed necessary by a district may be guided by the instructional approach used in a one-to-one home or hospital setting as compared to the instructional approach normally implemented in the student's school-based program. However, such a reduction in instructional time must be based on the educational benefit received by the student given the reduced teacher-student ratio. Service delivery, including the time of day the services are to be delivered, should be determined in the best interests of the student and in consideration of the medical circumstances of the student.

When planning and delivering home or hospital educational services, the school district should carefully consider all aspects of a student's educational program while attending school, including any current IEP services, Section 504 plans and instructional accommodations, as well as the student's general education services.

### **6) Is the Academic Content of Instruction and the Certification of Staff any Different for Home or Hospital Instruction Than for School-Based Instruction?**

Instruction that is provided in the home or hospital for public school students under 603 CMR 28.03(3)(c) must include the same academic content as that provided in the student's regular school-based program. While teacher certification requirements apply to the teachers who are providing the instruction, the teachers do not have to be certified in all subject areas. However, in all cases the school district must be able to demonstrate that the assigned staff member effectively provides the necessary instruction to the student. Teachers who provide home/hospital instruction to public school students must coordinate the instructional content, approach and student progress with the student's teachers at school.

For both public school students and private school students, special education and/or related services that are provided in a home or hospital setting under this provision must be delivered (or closely supervised) by staff certified or appropriately licensed to deliver such services.

### **7) May A School District Require That a Parent or Other Responsible Adult be in the Home While the District's Instructor is Working With the Student?**

If a district requires that an adult is present during homebound instruction, the district should take reasonable steps to ensure that this policy does not conflict with its obligation to provide instruction. A district could likely avert a potential conflict by arranging for instruction at a time (such as late afternoon or evening) when an adult would be at home with the student. If a district were unable to send an instructor at a time when an adult was at home, it would be permissible for the district to send a staff member to accompany the instructor. If a district is unable to arrange for instruction during hours when an adult will be at home or to send a staff member to accompany the instructor, the district should propose a reasonable alternative to the student's parent that would ensure that the student receives instruction while satisfying the district's legitimate concerns about safety and liability.

### **8) Under what Circumstances are Educational Collaboratives and Public and Private Day and Residential Special Education Schools Approved Under 603 CMR 28.09 Required to Provide Home or Hospital Instruction?**

If the school district continues to pay the costs of the placement in order to hold the enrollment status of the student in an educational collaborative program or a public or private special education school during the student's confinement to home or a hospital, the respective collaborative or public or private school must provide at no additional cost to the school district appropriate educational and special educational services. These services must be provided consistent with requirements of 603 CMR 28.03(3)(c)

If the student is not expected to remain in the placement after the student's confinement to home or hospital, the school district must ensure in another way that the student receives appropriate educational and special educational services or, if appropriate, reconvene the Team consistent with 603 CMR 28.04(4) and consider evaluation needs and/or revisions to the IEP taking into account the services the student needs while s/he is unable to attend school for medical reasons.

### **9) How Do These Requirements Apply to a Student Who is Enrolled in Private School at Private Expense and Needs Home/Hospital Instruction for Medical Reasons?**

As is stated above in answer to Question #1, although the regulation requiring home/hospital instruction is included in the Special Education Regulations (603 CMR 28.00), home/hospital instruction is not considered "special education" unless the student has been found eligible for special education. State law (G.L. Chapter 71B) requires school districts to provide special education to eligible students who are attending private school at the parent's expense or other private expense ("private school students"). Since home/hospital instruction can be a regular education or special education service, this has led to some confusion about the appropriate provision of home/hospital instruction for private school students.

- If the private school student already has an IEP under which the school district is providing special education services, then during the 14+ school days that the physician says the student will be out of school for medical reasons, the school district must provide the specially designed instruction and/or related services described on the student's current IEP, modified as necessary to accommodate the student's medical needs. If the student's medical condition is likely to affect the ability of the student to maintain effective school progress, the student's parent may request that the Administrator of Special Education convene a Team meeting to consider further evaluation of the student and, if appropriate, to amend the existing IEP or develop a new IEP. Modifications to the IEP can include home or hospital instruction. The Administrator of Special Education is required to convene a Team meeting without undue delay for any student with an IEP who, in the judgment of the student's physician, is likely to remain at home or in a hospital for more than 60 school days in any school year.
- If the private school student does not have an IEP and will be confined to home or a hospital for medical reasons, s/he may be eligible for special education services if the student's medical condition is determined to be a health impairment that adversely affects the student's educational performance. Under these circumstances, the parent is entitled, at any time, to request and receive an evaluation of the student by the public school district to determine if the student's medical condition meets special education eligibility requirements. If a physician indicates to a school district that the student has a medical or health condition that is likely to lead to extended school absence(s) or an inability to maintain effective educational progress, the school district shall treat such information as a referral for an evaluation to determine eligibility for special education. In such case, the school district shall, within five school days, send written notice to the student's parent seeking consent for such evaluation to occur (603 CMR 28.04(1)(a)). A Team may find a student eligible for special education based on a chronic or acute health impairment or other disability, as defined in 603 CMR 28.02(7), that adversely affects the student's educational performance.
- Under Massachusetts law, a private school student who has been determined to be a "school age child with a disability" as defined in G.L. Chapter 71B, § 1, is entitled to receive publicly-funded special education services in accordance with an IEP developed by the school district of residence. The school district may not refuse to evaluate the student because s/he is enrolled in private school or because s/he is currently out of school for medical reasons. The Department recommends that the Administrator of Special Education make every effort to expedite assessment(s) and the Team meeting so that services may be provided in a timely fashion. If the student is evaluated and determined to be a student who is eligible for special education, the student will be entitled to receive home/hospital instruction according to the IEP.
- If the private school student does not have an IEP and the parent does not wish to refer the student for a special education evaluation, the parent may contact the school district of residence, providing documentation from the student's physician that the student is confined to home or hospital for medical reasons for not less than 14 school days during the school year. The school district may, at its discretion, provide home/hospital instruction to

the student, using the district's resources to provide the instruction, but it is not required to do so unless the student is evaluated and found to be eligible for special education.

Please note that the public school district is under no obligation to be familiar with nor to use the private school's curriculum, textbooks, or related education materials, but shall provide home or hospital services designed to maintain the private school student's progress in general curriculum areas when such services have been included on the IEP. Consequently, if a private school student will be absent from school for medical reasons for an extended period of time, the student's parent should always contact the private school to find out what tutoring services or other home/hospital instruction the private school will provide to help the student keep up with his or her schoolwork. The administrators and teachers in the private school are most knowledgeable about the private school's curriculum and the coursework that the student is covering in class, and they are in the best position to design and provide tutoring or other home/hospital instruction that will enable the student to keep up with school assignments. Depending on the circumstances, the private school itself may have an obligation to provide accommodations or services to the student under federal civil rights laws, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, or under the contract of enrollment between the school and the parents.

### **10) Are Students With Chronic or Acute Health Issues Always Eligible for Special Education?**

The answer depends on the facts of the individual case. Any student with a medical or health condition that is likely to lead to extended school absence(s) or inability to maintain effective educational progress is a reasonable candidate to be referred to the public school district for initial evaluation to determine special education eligibility. Such referrals should take place as soon as it is known that a student's health condition is chronic or acute and is likely to have a negative educational impact, rather than delaying referral or action until the student is absent for significant periods of time or has begun to experience educational failure.

If assessment information indicates that the student's educational progress will be adversely affected as a result of a chronic or acute medical condition that is not temporary in nature, then the Team will likely determine that the student is eligible for special education. An eligibility determination is an individualized decision that depends on the facts of each case. In most cases, if the Team determines the student is eligible, the type of disability as recognized by federal and state special education law will be a "health impairment" (see 603 CMR 28.02(7)(i)). In some cases, the assessments may indicate other types of disability, such as "emotional impairment" or "neurological impairment."

If the student has been evaluated and found eligible for special education, the Team will write an IEP describing the special education and related services that the student needs and the school district will provide. If the student will be out of school for medical reasons for an extended period of time, it is appropriate to include on the IEP educational tutoring as a related service that the student needs in order to access the general curriculum while s/he is in the home or hospital setting. The IEP may be tailored to address expected time periods when the student is unable to attend school, if that is deemed appropriate to meet the unique needs of the individual student.

## **Alcohol and Use of Illegal Drugs Policy & Procedures**

### **Overview**

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The use and/or abuse of all substances including alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarette (e.g. vaping) and illegal drugs (including steroids), as well as the inappropriate use and/or abuse of legal substances (inhalants, electronic cigarettes, herbal supplements, prescription medications, dietary aids and over-the-counter medications) in school is both a violation of law and harmful to the educational purposes of our school.

It is the policy of the Christa McAuliffe Charter School that the school will respond to the use and/or abuse of substances including alcohol and illegal drugs, as well as the inappropriate use and/or abuse of legal substances through education, medical/health assistance, and discipline.

## Education

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An education/medical/health approach will be the first step in an attempt to help students decide not to use and/or abuse substances and to assist students who are involved.

Every effort will be made by teachers and counselors to educate students about substance use and/or abuse and to create an atmosphere of knowledge, confidence, and trust that will encourage young people to seek help in overcoming problems in substance abuse. Education primarily takes place in the school's Wellness Course.

Workshops will be provided to enhance faculty and parent/guardian awareness of the scope of substance abuse as related to our school, community, and society; to provide knowledge of scientific and medical findings; knowledge of laws relating to substance abuse and legal penalties for violation of the law; and to familiarize teachers with available educational resources. Those who will work in specific drug education areas will be trained for that responsibility.

## Community Liaisons

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The school will maintain liaisons with rehabilitation, treatment, judicial, law enforcement, and legislative agencies to help ensure that the total community capability is brought to bear on the elimination of substance abuse problems. Specific groups and organizations include:

- Framingham Police Department
- Framingham Public Schools
- Middlesex District Attorney's Office
- Advocates Community Counseling
- Wayside Youth and Family
- South Middlesex Opportunity Council

## Policy & Procedures

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### Policy

The use and/or abuse of any substance, including alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarette (e.g. vaping) and illegal drugs (including steroids), as well as the inappropriate use and/or abuse of legal substances (inhalants, herbal supplements, prescription medications, dietary aids and over-the-counter medications) is strictly prohibited on school grounds or during virtual learning. Any possession, use or sale of illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia, legal substances intended for misuse or alcoholic beverages on the school grounds, at school functions, during virtual learning, or on school buses is prohibited at all times. To minimize confusion, non-alcoholic beer and wine are not permitted in school at any time.

McAuliffe's goal to have a "Drug Free School" can only be achieved if the administration has the authority it needs to carry out the Drug/Alcohol policy. Therefore, the administration follows the principle of "reasonable suspicion" not "probable cause." Scholars smelling of alcohol or marijuana, or behaving in a manner that would indicate possession or ingestion of drugs or alcohol, on school property and at school events, are subject to this policy, and could be asked to submit to a field sobriety test, a search, and/or a breathalyzer test by the Framingham Police. Refusal to do so will necessitate the scholar's parents being called, and disciplinary action could follow.

The success of this policy depends, in part, on creating a link between the educational community and the local law enforcement agencies. To this end, McAuliffe and the Framingham Police Department agree to coordinate their efforts to prevent and control student substance use and to respond effectively to incidents in or out of school and at school-sponsored events.

### Procedures

The following steps will be taken in response to student use of substances:

1. If a student voluntarily confides a drug or alcohol problem to any staff member, the staff will consult immediately with a school counselor, school nurse, or building administrator, who will then consult the Director of Culture to

develop recommendations. In such instances, the school will work with the student and family to address the drug or alcohol problem.

2. If a school administrator has reasonable grounds to suspect, through direct observation, that a student is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, but no contraband is found, an assessment will be made. The student may be removed from class, and parental contact will occur immediately. The School Resource Officer will be informed of the incident. With the approval of the parent/guardian, the assessment may involve a test conducted by Framingham Police.
3. When a student is determined to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, but no contraband is found, the Director of Culture or designee will immediately notify parents and a conference will be held with the student and parents before the student returns to school. The student may be required to attend meetings of an approved alcohol or drug recovery program or other appropriate treatment. In addition, the student will be subject to a maximum of ten days of suspension from school. The School Resource Officer will be informed of the incident.
4. If a student is found to be in possession of a drug or alcohol, the Director of Culture or designee will notify parents and a conference will be held with the student and parents. The substance will be sealed and labeled with the date and time of confiscation and noted in the incident report. If it is a legal substance, it may be given to the parent or disposed of at the parent's request. If the substance is illegal, it will be turned over to the School Resource Officer. The student will be subject to a maximum of ten days' suspension from school and may be required to attend an approved alcohol or drug recovery program or other appropriate treatment. Depending on the student's intent with possession of a drug or alcohol, the student may be subject to expulsion from school. There will be a formal notification to the police by the school and appropriate action may be taken.
5. If a student is found to be selling, distributing or in possession of a quantity sufficient to be charged with the intent to distribute drugs or alcohol, the Director of Culture or designee will immediately notify the parent and the police for mandatory removal of the student. There will be Out of School Suspension and the student may be subject to expulsion. The police will take appropriate action under the law regarding the sale of drugs in proximity to school buildings.

The intent of McAuliffe's Drug and Alcohol Policy is to be proactive so that individuals with problems can be readily identified and provided with appropriate services.

## Resources / Supports

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If you are concerned about a McAuliffe scholar and the possible use of drugs or alcohol, we encourage you to contact one of our school counselors. In addition, here are some prevention tips provided by the [Bureau of Substance Abuse Services](#) within the [Massachusetts Department of Public Health](#).

In addition, here are some resources that families may find helpful:

- [Substance Use Prevention](#)- Mass.gov Health & Human Services
- [Talk with Your Teen About E-cigarettes: A Tip Sheet for Parents](#)
- [The Teen Vaping Trend -- What Parents Need to Know](#)
- [NIDA finds youth marijuana use, vaping increasing at alarming rates](#)
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### Prevention Tips for Your Middle School-Aged Child<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> This information is provided by the [Bureau of Substance Abuse Services](#) within the [Department of Public Health](#).  
139 Newbury Street, Framingham, MA 01701 | 508.879.9000 | [mcauliffecharter.org](#)

### **Help Your Child Have Good Friends**

- Know who your child is with and what they are doing.
- Get to know your child's friends and, where possible, support them in choosing friends who have a positive influence on their behavior.
- Help your child understand what values to look for in friends while in middle school. These learned skills help them develop healthier friendships throughout their teenage years.
- Try to make sure there is adult supervision when your child is with their friends
- Talk to their friend's parents about your rules concerning alcohol, and other drugs.

### **Start the Conversation – First Steps for Talking to Your Child**

- Know the facts - here are two to get you started:
- Most middle school-aged youth in Massachusetts don't use alcohol, or other drugs. Most use prescription drugs only if their doctor prescribes them.
- The younger a child starts to use alcohol and other drugs, the more likely it is that they will run into problems now, and in the future.

### **Stay Involved**

- Spend time with your child involving them in healthy activities.

### **Set Clear Ground Rules. Then Enforce Them.**

- Set ground rules so that your children know what is acceptable behavior. Let them know that alcohol, other drug use or misuse of prescriptions is simply unacceptable.
- Discuss with your children the privileges you plan to restrict if they do not follow the rules. For example, take away their video games or cell phone privileges for a set period of time. Follow through with your plans if rules are broken.
- Reward them when they do well.

### **Questions about Your Own Use**

- Your children look up to you and may copy your behavior. That is why it is important that you are thoughtful about what they hear you say or see you do.
- When your child asks questions about your own alcohol or other drug use sharing details may be harmful. Research suggests that when you describe past drug use to your child, you may be undercutting your message that they should not use.
- Keep the focus on your child.

If you are concerned about your own use of alcohol, or other drugs, [visit the Massachusetts Substance Abuse Helpline's website for more information or a referral to treatment in your area.](#)

### **Seeking Help for your Child**

If you are concerned about your child's use of alcohol, other drugs or misuse of prescriptions, the Department's Bureau of Substance Abuse Services can help.

For free and confidential information and referral services for youth and young adults (up to age 24) who are experiencing a problem with alcohol, or other drugs, contact

Toll Free: 866-705-2807 / 617-661-3991

TTY: 617-661-9051

# Academic Program

## EL Education (formerly Expeditionary Learning)

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Through EL Education core practices, McAuliffe provides diverse middle school learners with an educational experience that integrates high academic expectations with exploratory learning and character development. Teachers craft Learning Expeditions that launch scholars into in-depth studies of topics such as climate change, Framingham human rights upstanders, sustainable agriculture, and the social responsibilities of consumers.

## Curriculum

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### Learning Expeditions

McAuliffe's curriculum is organized into units of study called Learning Expeditions, which are aligned to Massachusetts standards. Learning Expeditions are cross-curricular units of study that guide scholars to grapple with and build an understanding of academic content through "real world" investigations into compelling subjects. Scholars work together to create projects, final products, and to showcase their learning in a culminating event. Learning Expeditions typically include fieldwork, service learning, work with experts, projects, a final product, and a culminating event with an authentic audience.

### Alignment with Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks

McAuliffe's curriculum is aligned with the current Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Teachers and leaders annual review and revise/refine the curriculum in order to make improvements to expeditions, lessons, projects, and assessments.

### Forms of Assessment

Learning Expeditions include various assessments: exit tickets, quizzes, tests, open responses, and projects, research, and writing assignments assessed using rubrics and checklists. Teachers review the results of the assessments and use the data to make adjustments to the upcoming lessons. If we taught it but we find that students did not learn it as well as we need them to, it is teachers' responsibility to re-teach or provide opportunities for additional practice.

### Curriculum Review

The school's teachers annually review curriculum to ensure alignment with standards and to address any weaknesses or misaligned learning targets, activities, or assessments. In addition, the school's Instructional Coaches (supervisors) regularly review specific educational materials via coaching and planning meetings.

Together, teachers and coaches review educational materials for simplistic and demeaning generalizations, lacking intellectual merit, on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, homelessness, or limited English proficiency. When materials involved in activities or discussions relate to any sort of stereotype or bias, coaches work with teachers to establish a developmentally appropriate way to engage students in learning in a psychologically safe and educationally focused way. In other words, discussions and/or materials are used to provide balance and context for any stereotype depicted in materials.

In the case that a student or parent/guardian believes that any curricula or supplementary material is inappropriate for a school setting, the school encourages families to share their perspective so that together teachers and parents/guardians can make sense of the situation, look at it from different lenses, and establish a resolution focusing on providing balance and context for any stereotypes depicted in materials.

## Instructional Practices

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At McAuliffe, effective instructional practices promote rigorous learning expectations, ensure that all scholars think and participate, and allow teachers to know their scholars well. McAuliffe teachers promote critical thinking by asking that scholars make connections, articulate patterns and relationships, understand diverse perspectives, give evidence for inferences and conclusions, and generalize to the big ideas of the discipline studied.

### Planning Effective Lessons

Teachers use both learning targets and knowledge of their scholars to plan lessons. Teachers craft lessons to build scholarly engagement and set a clear purpose. Teachers activate and build upon scholars' prior knowledge and aim for their lessons to build curiosity and provide a sense of purpose and urgency. Differentiation strategies are embedded within lessons to ensure that scholars are effectively supported and appropriately challenged. Teachers regularly use one or more instructional practices described below; these practices describe teaching in all content areas and grades.

Practice	Description of Practice
Total Participation Techniques	Teachers implement Total Participation Techniques (TPTs) in order to engage all scholars in critical thinking during the course of a lesson. TPTs include turn & talks, quick writes, four corners, and explain it to your neighbor.
Workshops	Teachers use the workshop format to model or demonstrate a concept, skill or strategy and then provide guided practice leading to independent practice.
Mini-lessons	Teachers introduce and teach concepts, skills, and strategies in a mini-lesson format; Teachers often develop mini-lessons in response to scholar work, assessment data, and misconceptions; Mini-lessons are taught to the whole class or small groups depending on scholar needs.
Protocols	Teachers use protocols to ensure all scholars are participating and engaging in critical thinking; Protocols are formats for discussion that have clear structures and guidelines. Examples include: building background knowledge, Socratic seminars, and jigsaws.
Demonstrations, Simulations, & Experiments	Teachers give demonstrations or guide scholars to participate in simulations so that scholars see how a process works or experience it for themselves. In science, scholars conduct self-guided experiments and dissections using scientific and engineering design processes.
Anchor Charts & other visuals	Teachers use anchor charts and other visual representations to showcase concepts and to make scholars' thinking and learning public in the classroom.
Graphic Organizers and Journals	Scholars represent their thinking using graphic organizers, two-column notes, recording forms, and journals.
Flexible Groupings	Teachers use flexible groupings to differentiate instruction; Scholars may work independently, in pairs, or in small groups depending on the learning activity.
Exemplars & Rubrics	Teachers provide scholars with exemplars of high-quality projects and criteria organized in the form of a rubric and/or checklist.
Multiple Drafts & Revision	Scholars produce multiple drafts of writing and products; they use checklists and rubrics as well as teacher and peer critique to improve successive drafts.

## Differentiation

All of McAuliffe's classes are mixed-ability to some degree and in each class, there are between one and three adults working with scholars. Some classes are co-taught by a general and special educator; other classes are taught by a general educator and supported by a teaching assistant. Other evidence of differentiation include:

- flexible groupings: scholars working individually, in pairs, or in small groups;
- choices for scholars according to interest, learning profile, or readiness;
- graphic organizers, checklists, and other scaffolding materials;
- variety of texts, prompts, and supplementary materials including varying levels of complexity;
- and small group targeted instruction.

## Co-Teaching & Inclusion Classes

McAuliffe prescribes an inclusive model of instruction, whenever possible. More than three-fourths of McAuliffe's core classes are either taught by a general educator and a special educator or taught by a general educator and supported by an inclusion assistant. Within co-taught classrooms, both teachers are responsible for the design and delivery of instruction and classroom management. Within supported classrooms, the classroom teacher is responsible for design of instruction and inclusion assistants support the delivery of instruction and classroom management. Accommodations are provided and modifications are made for scholars with accommodations or modifications described in their IEP or 504 plan. English Language Learners are also placed in classes where they receive instruction from educators trained in Sheltered English Immersion.

## English learners

English learners participate in general education such that they are included in classes with their English-speaking peers, this includes crew, academic classes, and related arts classes. When programmatically necessary, English learners will receive English instruction in place of their participation in Spanish or French. Students in the early stages of learning English may also receive targeted instruction during social studies or another core academic class. English instruction is aligned with their core academic learning as much as possible: previewing or reviewing content-specific vocabulary, reading and discussing English texts, and writing/revising essays and reports. English learners are also provided with the full range of academic opportunities and support afforded non-ELs, such as special education services, Section 504 Accommodation Plans, Title I services (homework club and summer services), lab intervention/extension as well as supports outlined in the district curriculum accommodation plan.

## Academic Honesty

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McAuliffe encourages scholars to take risks and complete high-quality, academic work. Academic dishonesty has no place in this type of environment and does not help a scholar learn.

“Plagiarism” means using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as if they were one’s own through neglect or failure to acknowledge the source of the other’s ideas or words. For example, cutting and pasting information from a website into an essay without writing anything else and without saying where the information came from is a form of plagiarism. Copying someone else’s writing or paraphrasing from a book without citing the source is also plagiarism. Teachers include plagiarism lessons that incorporate examples, case studies, and discussions throughout the year and across all grade levels.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating. Scholars who plagiarize will be required, at a minimum, to redo the work. Teachers work with the Dean of Students or designee to determine a fitting consequence for academic dishonesty using the Code of Character and the scholar’s behavioral history to inform decision-making.

Scholars learn how to be better readers, writers, scientists, and mathematicians by doing their own academic work. At McAuliffe, scholars are prohibited from using AI tools such as ChatGPT unless their teacher has explicitly told them they can do so for a specific assignment.

## Equal Educational Opportunity and Access

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Pursuant to its charter, Christa McAuliffe Charter School serves students in the 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade. The school ensures that all students regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, homelessness, or limited English proficiency have equal access to the school's general education program.

### Non Discrimination Statement

The Christa McAuliffe Charter School (McAuliffe) may not and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, homelessness, or limited English proficiency (M.G.L. c. 71, § 89(m); 603 CMR 1.06(l)). For questions about compliance or to communicate a grievance, please contact the individuals listed below who together serve to coordinate compliance under Title IX and Section 504.

John Ermilio  
Director of Business & HR  
508-879-9000x616  
[jermilio@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:jermilio@mcauliffecharter.org)

Tony Fratantonio  
Director of Culture  
508-879-9000x133  
[afratantonio@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:afratantonio@mcauliffecharter.org)

Michelle Arons  
Director of Student Services  
508-879-9000x431  
[marons@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:marons@mcauliffecharter.org)

Noel Green  
Executive Director  
508-879-9000x613  
[ngreen@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:ngreen@mcauliffecharter.org)

### Full Inclusion Program

Unless otherwise specified in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or related to the student's English learning program, all students participate in all elements of the school's general education program including crew, core classes (English language arts, social studies, mathematics, science), a language class (Spanish or French), and related arts classes (adventure, design, technology for learning and life, and wellness). Classes are inclusion classes and many are taught by both a general educator and a special educator or inclusion assistant. Some students participate in a learning center class instead of a language class. This is defined by their IEP. Some students participate in a substantially separate English language arts or mathematics class as defined by their IEP. English learners may services instead of participating in Spanish or French.

### Availability of In-School Programs for Pregnant Students

Pregnant students are permitted to remain in regular classes and participate in extracurricular activities with non-pregnant students throughout their pregnancy, and after giving birth are permitted to return to the same academic and extracurricular program as before the leave.

The school does not require a pregnant student to obtain the certification of a physician that the student is physically and emotionally able to continue in school unless it requires such certification for all students for other physical or emotional conditions requiring the attention of a physician.

### Program Assessment & Institutional Self-Evaluation

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The school annually reviews its academic program in a variety of ways:

- 1) Expeditionary Learning Implementation Review
- 2) Analysis of annual standardized assessment achievement results (e.g. MCAS)
- 3) Attendance and Behavioral Data
- 4) End of year review of specific program areas (e.g. Enrichment, Athletics, etc)

In the late spring of each school year, school leaders review all parts of the school's academic program to ensure that all students, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability,

homelessness, or limited English proficiency have equal access to all programs, including athletics and other extracurricular activities.

## Structured Learning Time / Schedule

### Definition

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Per Massachusetts state law and regulations, public middle schools classified as elementary schools (versus secondary) must schedule all enrolled students to receive a minimum of 900 hours of structured learning time in a minimum of 180 student school days. Time not counting toward the 900 hours of structured learning includes time spent in homeroom, passing between classes, at recess, at lunch, at breakfast, as well as time in non-directed study, receiving school services, and in optional school programs.

At McAuliffe students participate in at least 900 hours of structured learning time by participating in their core academic classes (English Language Arts, Social Studies, Math, Science), World Language Class (Spanish or French) or Learning Center, and Related Arts Classes (Adventure, Wellness, Design, and Technology). All students participate in LAB, an intervention/enrichment course that includes direct instruction four days out of six. All students also participate in Crew, a character education advisory program that guides scholars' development of social-emotional skills.

### Student Scheduling

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Student scheduling is a complex process that involves matching up each student in the school with the appropriate courses and service delivery (for students with IEPs). 6th and 7th-grade teachers give input to guide the placement of students in their 7th/8th-grade classes and crew. The school uses input from families of incoming 6th graders to guide the placement of students into 6th-grade classes and crew. Sometimes parents make requests for students to be with or to be away from other students in the grade or with certain teachers. Depending on the situation, the school may or may not grant these requests.

### Technology-Assisted Learning, Independent Studies, & School-to-Work Programs

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The school does not currently offer any technology-assisted learning, independent studies, or school-to-work programs.

## School Supplies & Materials

### Supply List

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Families receive a supply list before the school year begins. Some supplies are for individual scholars and some will be collected for a shared classroom supply. We ask that families provide as many of the supplies named on the list as possible, but understand if a family cannot afford to provide the shared supplies.

Families who are not able to purchase school supplies should contact a school counselor or Tony Fratantonio, Director of Culture.. McAuliffe will assist scholars, ensuring each scholar has the materials they need in school to be successful learners.

### Books/Textbooks

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Not all classes have textbooks, but those we use are loaned to scholars for their use during the school year. We expect scholars to treat all material on loan with respect and care. All books must be returned in good condition. Scholars/families will be expected to pay for damaged or lost books.

## Student Planners

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McAuliffe provides each scholar with a planner at the start of the year. Scholars are responsible for keeping track of their planners. If a scholar loses his or her planner, he/she may purchase a replacement in the main office for \$5.

## Backpacks and Bags

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Scholars switch classes regularly during the day, so we recommend that they carry a backpack or bag to hold their notebooks, pens, pencils, and other materials. A good rule of thumb is that if a backpack is too heavy to lift easily, something needs to come out of it. Many teachers here use a system in which scholars carry only spiral notebooks and leave their heavy binders on shelves in the classroom. Please contact your child's Crew Leader if your child is having a hard time figuring out how to decrease the weight of his/her backpack on his/her own. Crew Leaders lead regular Backpack Clean-out sessions during Academic Crew. This task guides scholars to develop organizational skills for their learning materials.

# Fieldwork & Off-Site Community Building

## Fieldwork

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Learning Expeditions involve scholars participating in off-campus fieldwork and welcoming guest experts into our classrooms. Fieldwork is an experience outside of the classroom that is necessary in order for scholars to gain greater background knowledge or to collect authentic data through interviews, observations, or scientific testing. Fieldwork is a part of an Expedition, not the Expedition itself.

Fieldwork may be a day trip or overnight. We do our best to provide scholars with the necessary accommodations so that all members of a class can participate on the trip. A letter is sent home early in the year outlining the anticipated fieldwork experiences and associated costs. We ask that all families support the fieldwork fund by paying the anticipated cost in full or in installments. If a family does not feel they can provide the funds, even in installments, they must speak directly with the school's Director of Business and Operations to talk about scholarship opportunities.

McAuliffe has a safety/emergency protocol in which all teachers are trained in advance for the fieldwork.

## Adventure-based Community Building Activities (Off-Site)

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On several occasions (at least once per grade), scholars participate in off-site adventure-based, community building activities. These are a special type of fieldwork that focus on culture and character learning targets. Often these activities are embedded in other scholarly work (e.g., white water rafting during which scholars learn about water flow and currents/weathering and erosion). Scholars will be guided to step outside of their comfort zones, to work with their peers (or Crew) through challenging situations, and to reflect on their personal growth.

## Participation

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Teachers and administrators work with all families to ensure that as many scholars as possible participate in the school's off-site activities, including fieldwork and community building. These experiences are part of the school's program and curriculum and so it is only in very rare cases, including illness, family emergency, discipline, or lack of permission, that a scholar will not participate. In some cases, scholars participate in a modified way (shortened day) or with accommodations (including parent chaperone), but very rarely will a scholar not participate at all. The school is responsible for implementing Individualized Education Programs and 504 plans during off-site experiences. Faculty and

staff provide modifications and accommodations to a reasonable extent. Case managers and parents/guardians will communicate as needed to clarify plans for implementation of IEPs and 504s.

The school faculty will not share these confidential documents with non-McAuliffe staff working for programs that scholars participate in during fieldwork (e.g. Berkshire Outdoor Center). However, faculty do prep non-McAuliffe staff by previewing the types of challenges that a cohort of scholars may experience. In addition, most programs that McAuliffe works with ask families to disclose information related to their scholar's health and physical fitness (as needed) so that they can prepare for ways to modify activities or accommodate scholars, including preparation of meals for scholars with food allergies.

Teachers preview all off-site activities with scholars in order to prepare scholars for the experience and to alleviate anxiety which sometimes comes up -- especially before overnight trips. Teachers and school counselors provide support for scholars who experience substantial anxiety. Supports include meeting with parent and Crew leader to develop a plan and organizing check-ins with the Crew leader or counselor to prepare for the trip. Parents/guardians play an important role in this process. On some occasions, the plan includes a parent/guardian participating in the fieldwork for either part or all of the time.

In the case that a scholar has demonstrated unsafe behaviors or difficulty following school rules or direction from faculty/staff, he/she may require a specific plan to be established in order for him/her to participate in the off site experience. The plan may include but is not limited to: behavior contract, parent/guardian escort, modified trip (e.g. participating during the day but not staying overnight). In some cases, the school may determine that a scholar will not participate in the off-site experience and will instead engage in an alternate learning experience at school. If a behavioral consequence (such as a suspension) overlaps with an off-site experience, the scholar will not be able to participate in the off-site experience.

## Permission Practices

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Teachers and administrators communicate with families about upcoming fieldwork weeks in advance through weekly newsletters, emails, and a hard copy of a permission slip, which includes detailed information about the activity. If the experience includes an overnight, a comprehensive package of information is provided to families, and teachers host an information session at the school for families to learn about the trip in a face-to-face setting.

Permission slips are sent home with scholars at least one week before the trip. Scholars are assigned the responsibility to have the permission slip signed by a parent/guardian and to return the permission slip to the teacher by a specified due date. Information about when permission slips are due is posted on classroom homework boards and reiterated verbally by teachers.

As the off-site experience nears, teachers will use reasonable efforts to remind scholars who have not handed in the permission slips to do so, including handing out additional slips if needed. If there are scholars without signed permission slips the day before the trip, teachers will use reasonable efforts to contact the scholar's family via phone or email to remind the family that the scholar must have a signed permission slip in order to participate in the off-site fieldwork.

If the school does not receive permission for the scholar to participate in the off-site activity, the scholar remains at the school working on relevant learning tasks in a location identified by administrators. The school continues to try to get in touch with the family in order to learn why permission was not given and to rectify the situation.

# Culminating Events

## Overview

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Learning expeditions conclude with a culminating event during which students showcase their learning with an authentic audience. At McAuliffe, culminating events are one of the key times when we come together as a community to celebrate our students and their learning. Families and faculty have the opportunity to learn from students and their work. All students have a role and engage in public speaking during culminating events. Students learn specific presentation skills, practice presenting, and receive feedback from teachers and peers.

## Participation

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All students are expected to attend the culminating events for their grade level-- generally two per year. Full student participation is critical for several reasons: each student has a key role and is accountable to his or her peers and the event is an opportunity to demonstrate critical skills with an external audience. Above all culminating events allow students to take pride in what they have accomplished. We find that even students who are initially reluctant to attend find culminating events to be meaningful and joyful opportunities for celebration and learning.

The school also asks families to commit to attending these events so they can celebrate and understand their children's learning. The School collects data on student and family attendance at culminating events. We aim for at least 95% of our students and families to participate in two culminating events per year. We report on our student and family attendance rates in the annual report submitted to the Department of Education.

If you anticipate that it may be challenging for your student to attend for logistical reasons, please contact your student's crew leader so we can support you in making arrangements such as carpools. If it will be impossible for a family member to attend, please contact the Director of Teaching and Learning so we can work to involve you via a videotape of your student's presentation or other means.

# Supporting Struggling Scholars

## Introduction

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McAuliffe's goal is to meet the needs of every scholar, whether a struggling learner or one who is exceeding grade level expectations. To achieve this goal, McAuliffe employs Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). MTSS is a coherent continuum of evidence-based, system-wide practices to support an effective response to academic and behavioral needs, with frequent data-based monitoring to support instructional decision making. Teachers, counselors, and school leaders are continuously monitoring student progress.

The following individuals facilitate and oversee the school's tiered intervention systems:

- Nellie Zupancic, Director of Teaching and Learning
- Michelle Arons, Director of Student Services

## Three Tiers of Intervention

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McAuliffe employs a three-tiered model to provide accommodations and interventions at a sufficient level of intensity.

### Tier 1: Primary Level

All students receive research-based, high quality instruction that incorporates universal screening, progress monitoring and differentiated instruction. Expectations are taught, modeled, enforced, and monitored in all settings by all adults. Student performance data informs the process of differentiating instruction to meet all needs. Teams of teachers consult about students periodically to ensure that they are replicating successful practices across classrooms.

### Tier 2: Secondary Level

Students who do not demonstrate sufficient response to Tier 1 supports will be identified and referred to the Student Data/RTI Team, which will prescribe more intensive interventions (Tier 2/Tier3) to support academic and/or behavioral progress. The implementation of interventions will be tracked and progress monitoring data will be collected and analyzed by the team. Interventions may include, but are not limited to: targeted group or individual instruction, re-teaching activities, use of prescriptive software programs, specialized schedules, brief instruction of organizational and/ or time management strategies and employment of other tools that provide targeted support.

**Tier 3: Tertiary Level**

These interventions are reserved for students with the most significant learning and/or behavioral needs. Delivery of instruction and progress monitoring of students receiving Tier 3 interventions will be conducted with greater frequency than that of students receiving Tier 2 interventions. Interventions at Tier 3 may be similar to those at Tier 2, but provided with greater frequency or longer duration. Additionally, Tier 3 intervention may include referral to determine if special education services are needed.

**Tier 1 Accommodations Available to All Students**

Below is a list of strategies and actions which McAuliffe educators use on a regular basis with many or all students. This list includes accommodations to address obstacles to academic progress, as well as strategies and interventions intended to address social, emotional, or behavioral issues. Accommodations listed below may be applied to activities that take place on the school setting and during off site fieldwork.

**District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP)**

As part of a wide range of tiered interventions, McAuliffe’s District Curriculum Accommodation Plan<sup>16</sup> (DCAP) guides teachers, counselors, and coaches to ensure that all possible efforts have been made to meet student needs in the general education program.

<p><b>Curriculum/Instruction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make real world connections to in-class work through learning expeditions / case studies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Design collaborative learning activities, including projects and simulations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Design lessons targeting multiple modalities: kinesthetic, visual, verbal, etc.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Post and discuss learning targets</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use total participation techniques to ensure full participation (cold call, turn &amp; talk, etc.)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide wait time for understanding</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Teach Habits of Work and Learning (HOWLs) targets; assess and track progress</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Differentiate instruction by readiness, process, interest, etc.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Small group instruction within the classroom</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Strategically grouping students</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use of note-catchers, checklists and graphic organizers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide exemplars, rubrics, and study guides</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide verbal and written directions; Restate or reword directions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide modeling and guided practice</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ask students to repeat instructions or information from classwork</li> </ul>	<p><b>Executive Functioning (Organization)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Establish, practice, and re-teach routines</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Write Agenda, Do Now, Targets and Homework in the same place each day, color-coded by subject</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Set location to turn in assignments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide timeline of due dates for long term assignments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Maintain an orderly classroom environment free from visual and auditory distractions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide a low-distraction work area</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Preview transitions and schedule changes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use countdowns, displayed timer, or verbally monitor time that has passed during independent work time (“10 minutes have passed”)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Backpack clean outs during Academic Crew</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Break down tasks or directions into chunks</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> After instructions are given, allow use of earplugs or headphones to block out distractions</li> </ul> <p><b>Assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Employ student engaged assessment practices, including: standards-based grading, self-assessment, tracking progress, reflection, portfolios, Powerschool (online gradebook)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Teach test-taking strategies</li> </ul>
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<sup>16</sup> Massachusetts General Law (MGL), Chapter 71, Section 38Q ½ require a public school district’s adoption and implementation of a District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP).

- Re-teach topic in a different way
- Use of reading strategies (coding text, reading journal, highlighting, think aloud)
- Provide audio versions of text for student to listen to while following along with written text
- Pre-teach vocabulary
- Use of manipulatives (math)
- Advanced math in 6th/7th/8th; Leveled math classes in 7th and 8th grades
- Individual support / check-ins with teacher
- Shorten assignments (do the odds / evens, etc)

**Behavioral**

- Employ Management in the Active Classroom techniques:
  - Assign roles to group work & jobs in crew
  - Create a classroom norms or a full value contract
  - Teach routines/expectations and guide students to own them
  - Pace the lesson based on classroom needs
  - Teach students to use protocols
  - Set up classroom so that students can help themselves (e.g. access to materials)
- Assigned seats / seating chart; preferential seating
- Distribute HOWLs Cards with “Specific Positive Praise Statements”
- Provide movement breaks (e.g., Brain Gym )
- Calmly cue student for change of behavior
- Redirect student back to task
- Provide a non-verbal prompt (e.g. laminated card)
- Preview transitions
- Provide stress object to squeeze quietly at desk (set clear expectations for usage)
- Access to balance ball or stand while working
- Allow student to leave class for a walk to the water fountain or take space just outside the classroom (set clear expectations for usage; not to SSC)
- Provide sensory resources (stability ball, foot band for chair legs, inflatable cushion, headphones to reduce sound)
- Flexible seating options within classrooms
- Planned Ignoring: give no attention to behavior
- Give choices or “forced choices”
- State observable facts based on what is happening

- Provide extended time
- Clarify testing directions

**Technology**

- McAuliffe email account with Drive, Google Classroom, Calendar, including access to Google Read&Write
- 1-1 Computers
- Computer programs that reinforce skill development (Kahn, IXL, etc)

**Social/Emotional**

- Participate in Crew (advisory group) of about 12 students and 1 crew leader
- Utilize “First\_\_\_\_\_ then \_\_\_\_\_” statements
- Restate to student what you understood him/her say
- Acknowledge student concerns and emotional states with empathy.
- Access to school counselors
- Access to “cool off spots” in classrooms
- Conference with a student prior to start of class
- Frequent check-ins for understanding of materials

**Health/Medical**

- Access to school nurse
- Students encouraged to carry water bottle
- Snacking allowed during designated times of day
- Provide student escort
- Allow extra/chair/pillow to elevate extremities
- Provide preferred seating

The following personnel provide support directly or indirectly to students in the general education program.

Crew Leader	Each student has a Crew Leader who he/she sees at least once per every day of the school year. The Crew leader serves as the student’s academic advisor, helps him/her navigate academic challenges, stays abreast of academic progress, and communicates with other teachers and the student’s parents as well. Crew leaders organize Student Led Conferences twice per year during which the student leads a conference attended by parents/guardians and the crew leader. See more information in the section of the handbook about Student Led Conferences (SLCs).
School Counselors	<p>Students in the school have access to school counselors. Students may request to meet with a counselor through email, a note from a parent, submitting a counselor referral form online, or by visiting the counselor’s office. The counselor will make a good faith effort to follow up with the student as soon as possible. As needed, the counselor will consult with other members of faculty and/or the student’s parents.</p> <p>Counselors engage in the following activities: serve as a liaison between home and school, provide parent and teacher support and consultation, monitor attendance/truancy, support high school transition, facilitate lunch groups, facilitate Gay Straight Alliance (GSA). Counselors also regularly check in with students, develop and oversee behavior plans, and facilitate planned breaks or “respite” for students who need a quiet space to work for a period of time.</p>
Instructional Coaches	Responsibilities include: Teacher consultation, staff training, student engagement via total participation techniques, ongoing formative assessment, use of organizers, visuals, note-catchers, parent/student consult as needed in specific content areas.
ELL Teacher/Coordinator	Responsibilities include: Teacher consultation, classroom observations, W-APT screening and ACCESS analysis, push-in / pull-out services.
School Nurse	The school nurse consults with families related to health related situations and attendance/truancy, as needed.
Safety Officer	Police Department liaison provides individual student and parent consultation, typically in safety situations.
Attendance Officer	The Attendance Officer provides consultation and support to the school and families navigating patterns of school refusal or absenteeism.

### Tier 2 Targeted Intervention

Based on information gathered from a number of sources (e.g. teacher referral, universal screening, tracking of student performance and behavioral consequences, attendance) and response to Tier 1 accommodations and interventions, students may be referred to the Student Data/RTI Team, which will prescribe more intensive and targeted interventions. Parent/guardian concerns may also initiate the process of referring a student to the Student Data/RTI Team to discuss a student and establish Tier 2 interventions. The meeting to discuss Tier 2 interventions for students is referred to as “Team Plus.”

Below are examples of Tier 2 accommodations and interventions which some students may receive to support their specific needs. These interventions are identified at the meeting of the Student Data/RTI Team and progress is periodically reviewed by this team. If a student responds positively to the new strategy(ies), teams continue to implement and track progress.

<p><b>Curriculum/Instruction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reading Comprehension, Reading Fluency or Writing Lab</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Math Lab</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Read Naturally</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Peer Tutoring</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Targeted small group instruction</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Individual support / check-ins with teacher</li> </ul> <p><b>Assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Vary assessment method</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Scribe</li> </ul> <p><b>Technology</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Targeted use of Assistive Technology Tools (e.g. Speech-to-Text, Text-to-Speech)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide audio versions of text for student to listen to while following along with written text</li> </ul> <p><b>Health/Medical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Student allowed to leave class 2 to 3 minutes early</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Breaks, as needed</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Specific snack plans or chewy snacks (sensory)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Adjusted schedule; arrival/dismissal</li> </ul>	<p><b>Executive Functioning (Organization)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Initial or stamp planners</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide timeline of due dates for long term assignments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Self-Monitoring checklists</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Extra set of texts for home use</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Check-In Check-Out</li> </ul> <p><b>Behavioral</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Preference/Motivational Assessment (e.g. Motivational Assessment Scale)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Check-In Check-Out</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Class Pass</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Positive Behavior Support Plan</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Structured breaks with a timer</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Self-Monitoring checklist</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Specific job assigned for that student in the class or crew</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sensory Break</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Specific non-verbal signals</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Daily or weekly behavior form to go home / daily or weekly structured communication with hom</li> </ul> <p><b>Social/Emotional</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Social Thinking Lab</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Lunch Bunch Social Groups</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Targeted small group counseling</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Recess plan</li> </ul>
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### Tier 3 Intensive Intervention

If a student does not demonstrate sufficient progress in response to Tier 2 interventions following a minimum of 3 cycles of review (3 months), more intensive (Tier 3) intervention is prescribed by the Student Data/RTI Team. Development and monitoring of these interventions may employ additional specialists (e.g. the school's contracted school psychologist from Wediko Children's Services). The team develops and implements the new action plan and continues to collect data and monitor progress in response to the interventions. If the student makes progress, the team continues to monitor and adjust the action plan as needed over time. If the student does not make progress, the plan or goal may be adjusted and/or the student may be referred to outside community resources or recommended for an evaluation. See "Special Education Referral" section for more information.

### Partnering with Parents/Guardians

Parents and guardians play an important role in the student support and RTI procedures. The School encourages parents/guardians with a concern about their child's learning to communicate with their child's teacher or crew leader. The School is also responsible for engaging the parents/guardians in the RTI process. For example, parents/guardians may be invited to participate in Student Data/RTI Team meetings to help build a full picture of the student's history, to identify interventions, and to monitor progress.

The School employs a variety of structures that promote open lines of communication with families and active family involvement in students' education:

- Each student's crew leader serves as the primary communicator with the student's family. The crew leader reaches out to families at the start of the school year to establish contact and begin to build a relationship. If parents/guardians have questions or concerns, they are guided to first contact the crew leader.
- McAuliffe teachers engage in regular communication with parents/guardians via email and phone. Teachers are encouraged to communicate about student successes and growth rather than just focus on challenges. Teachers and crew leaders also meet with parents/guardians as needed for a conference -- sometimes requested by the family, sometimes by the teacher(s). McAuliffe faculty are expected to respond to emails and voicemails within 2 business days.
- Teachers are responsible for updating their online gradebook (Powerschool) weekly so that it accurately reflects student progress and helps families respond to situations such as assignments not getting turned in. Students and their parents/guardians are encouraged to log into Powerschool regularly. Students also log into Powerschool at school, especially during academic crew, to check on their progress.
- Printed progress reports are sent home three times per year, at the end of each trimester. Progress reports include information on each student's academic standing at the end of the trimester, including progress toward the trimester's long term learning targets and HOWLs.
- Crew leaders are responsible for ensuring that all students in the crew participate in the November and April SLCs. If a crew leader has difficulty scheduling an SLC with a family, counselors and leaders support the crew leader in the communication and scheduling process

## Professional Development

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The School is committed to providing meaningful professional development (PD) activities. School and teacher leaders facilitate PD for two hours each Tuesday afternoon (2pm-4pm). PD is planned in collaboration with EL Education school designers. PD also takes place through instruction coaching, off site institutes and training, and collaborative work sessions guided by coaches.

All teachers participate in instructional coaching, facilitated by their supervisor. Teachers are observed by their coach between 2-5 times per month. New or struggling teachers are observed more frequently. Following the observation, the teacher and coach meet to discuss the observation and identify action steps.

Teachers and instructional coaches collaborate to build common assessments. Teachers and coaches analyze the results of the assessments and build action plans to support the whole group, small group, and individual student learning.

## Special Education Referral

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If your child has received tiered intervention prescribed by the Student Data/RTI Team and continues to struggle to demonstrate sufficient progress, we may recommend conducting a psychoeducational evaluation and/or an FBA in order to determine what may be underlying your child's challenges. After the testing is completed, a Team that includes your child's teachers, the Director of Student Services, school psychologist, and sometimes related service providers and parents, will convene to discuss the results and determine whether your child qualifies for special education services. If your child is found not eligible for special education services, there may be other services and/or supports that they are eligible to receive (e.g. Accommodation Plan under Section 504).

There are times when a parent/guardian requests an evaluation prior to implementation of tiered interventions. We encourage families to work with the school through our RTI process prior to engaging in a full evaluation. We urge families to reach out to Michelle Arons, Director of Student Services prior to requesting an evaluation. However, if the family feels strongly about conducting an evaluation and/or the school also believes that an evaluation would be helpful given a unique circumstance, the school will provide a consent form to be signed by parents/guardians. Once the consent form has been signed and received, we will complete the evaluation within the regulatory timeline. Psychoeducational evaluations are conducted by our School Psychologist. To request an evaluation, please write a letter to Michelle Arons, Director of Student Services, outlining your main concerns and reason for referring your child for an evaluation. Please see state regulations for more information about initial evaluations: 603 CMR 28.04.

## Structures that Support Equity

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McAuliffe teachers build on student interests, strengths and backgrounds, and appreciate cultural differences and their influence on curriculum and instruction. Exhibitions and performances present student work to the entire community. All students are expected to participate in fieldwork sessions (including overnight camping trips) since fieldwork is an important part of the Expeditionary Learning curriculum. All students are also encouraged to participate in the school's after-school enrichment program.

McAuliffe's schedule includes an intervention period during the day called "Goal Block". For some scholars, Goal Block is an opportunity to extend learning and for others it is a time for scholars to receive additional support, particularly if they are struggling to meet a learning target. During Goal Blocks, scholars receive targeted math, reading, writing and social pragmatics instruction based on their individual needs. McAuliffe also employs systems to support students most at risk of failing. These include an after school Title 1 Homework club and summer school program which runs two weeks in the summer.

## Summer School

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By the end of a school year, if a scholar is not meeting course expectations, he or she may be recommended for summer school. The goal of summer school is to engage students in learning during summer months because the student demonstrates a need for additional instruction, practice, and application of skills and understanding.

Most students who need to attend summer school will be recommended to enroll in their home district's (the town in which your family resides) summer school program. All families (whether they reside in Framingham or not) also have the option of enrolling their child in the Framingham Public School's summer school program.

## Promotion/Non-Promotion

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At McAuliffe we examine promotion/non-promotion on an individual basis. Scholars struggling substantially in more than through much of the year may truly benefit from repeating that grade. Teachers, administrators, and/or parents with significant concerns about whether a scholar is academically ready for the next grade level will meet in person to discuss the benefits and drawbacks of the scholar repeating the grade or being promoted. Professionals will also use "Light's Retention Scale" to assist in decision-making.

# Goal Block Intervention & Extension

## Overview

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Goal Block is an intervention/extension course designed to target the area where each individual student most needs support or a push. Students are assigned to Goal Block classes based on data and teacher recommendations. Each Goal Block class lasts for half of the school year. Teachers will assess students on an ongoing basis and we will make adjustments to class assignments as needed.

Students are not formally graded for Goal Block however, teachers assess students and monitor progress on an ongoing basis. Teachers use ongoing assessment to determine adjustments for future Goal Block assignments.

## How does Goal Block work for scholars who have Individualized Education Plans?

Goal Block classes supplement the support we provide to students in learning center, substantially separate classes, and English Language Learner classes; if your scholar receives one or more of those services, he or she will continue to

participate in those courses at another time in the school day. For students who have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), some service delivery may be administered during Lab.

## What are the Goal Block Classes?

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### Extension Goal Block

Students who are already working at or above grade level in the areas targeted by Math, ELA, and Skills labs will be assigned to an Extension Goal Block. Extension Goal Blocks are academic courses that are designed to continue to push students in an academic discipline. They build on the strengths and passions of our faculty as well as the academic needs of our strongest scholars. 6th-grade extension Goal Block students launch the year with an independent reading Goal Block, designed to build their ability to read challenging texts independently, and then move into other extension Goal Blocks.

### Math Goal Block

Math Goal Block is designed for students who are at risk for below-grade learning outcomes in mathematics. Students who need extra support around basic computation and will receive robust intervention during Math Goal Block. These Goal Blocks have a very small teacher to student ratio.

### ELA Goal Block

Students who need extra support in reading grade-level texts with comprehension will receive targeted instruction in ELA Goal Block. Like Math Goal Block, ELA Goal Blocks have a very small teacher to student ratio, and instruction will be focused on increasing students' abilities to read with basic and/or inferential comprehension with increasing independence. Some students are assigned to a writing Goal Block, which will focus primarily on writing organization and clarity.

### Social Thinking Goal Block

Some students have been identified as needing social skill teaching in a group setting where peers can learn and practice with each other. The curriculum is based on a Social Thinking foundation, a framework for social skill teaching developed by Michelle Garcia Winner, a well-known speech and language pathologist. Students will learn how to read clues in the social world around them, why and how to take someone else's perspective, create desired impressions of themselves, the importance of using tools to regulate emotions and what the "hidden" social rules are of middle school which are not explicitly taught.

## Special Populations: Special Education, 504 Plans, and English Language Learners

### Special Education

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As a public charter school, McAuliffe is committed to working with families as a Team to transfer students with IEPs into the school and to provide comparable services to meet the students' learning needs.

### Special Education Laws and Regulations

Education Laws and Regulations specific to special education are covered under 603 CMR 28.00. 603 CMR 28.00 is promulgated pursuant to the authority of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education under M.G.L. c. 69, §1B, and c. 71B. 603 CMR 28.00 governs the provision by Massachusetts public schools of special education and related services to eligible students and the approval of public or private day and residential schools seeking to provide special education services to publicly funded eligible students. The requirements set forth in 603 CMR 28.00 are in addition to, or in some

instances to clarify or further elaborate, the special education rights and responsibilities set forth in state statute (M.G.L. c. 71B), federal statute (20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq. as amended), and federal regulations (34 CFR §300 et seq. as amended).

The purpose of 603 CMR 28.00 is to ensure that eligible Massachusetts students receive special education services designed to develop the student's individual educational potential in the least restrictive environment in accordance with applicable state and federal laws.

### **Referral, Evaluation, and Eligibility Determination Procedures**

Students suspected of having a disability are referred for evaluation and assessment to determine eligibility. A student may be referred for an evaluation by a parent or any person in a caregiver or professional position concerned with the student's development. Assessment in the area of academic achievement as well as any area of suspected disability is required for the eligibility determination process. As part of the assessment process, skill deficits consistent with an educational disability category are identified. Eligibility decisions are made by a Team consisting of a general education teacher, special education teacher, parents/guardians, any related service provider, the Director of Student Services or Special Education Coordinator and psychologist. If the child is 14 at the time of the meeting, they also will be invited to be part of the meeting.

If eligibility is determined, the Team develops an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and identifies services and supports necessary to build skills in the deficit areas for the purposes of access to the curriculum. Consistent with federal and state laws and regulations, service and placement decisions are made with consideration to support in the least restrictive environment. For students determined to be eligible for special education services, a continuum of services are available within the school for consideration by the Team.

The school has services for children who require specialized instruction as written in each of their Individual Education Plans. Specialists in speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, learning disabilities, assistive technology, vision disabilities and/or behavioral/emotional concerns service designated children. Some specialists are employees of the school and some are contracted by the school to provide services to specific students.

### **Transition/Intake Process**

After families enroll in the school, families should alert the school (via enrollment processes) that the child has an IEP or 504. Families should attend meetings for incoming special education families in order to learn about the transition process and the school's special education program.

Families each attend their district's IEP transition meeting in the spring in order to transfer the IEP for a middle school. Then, at the beginning of their 6th grade year, the family will meet in person, or remotely with their new McAuliffe Team for a transition meeting. At this meeting, the Team adjusts the IEP so that it aligns with the McAuliffe program and so that it provides comparable services. The services will most likely look similar to the services a scholar received previously, but sometimes the services do look different. We are committed to working with families to build understanding of the school's program and understanding of the comparable services.

The school will meet with families additionally, as needed, in order to adjust the implementation of the plan prior to the annual or re-evaluation meeting.

Families in the midst of an initial evaluation or reevaluation in the sending school/district should try to complete that process before transferring to McAuliffe.

### **Transition to High School for Students on IEPs**

For students who have IEPs, McAuliffe will schedule a transition meeting in the spring of their 8th grade year with the high school that your child will be attending the following fall. For students who will be attending private high schools, no transition meeting will occur, due to private schools not following the same special education protocols as public schools. At the transition meeting, a representative from the high school attends the meeting, as well as your child's special education teacher from McAuliffe, and your child if they are 14 at the time of the meeting. We will go over your

child's IEP goals and services and how they will transfer over to their high school. At this time, you can ask any questions you may have for the high school's special education department, and teachers and staff from McAuliffe can share any important information about your child with their new high school. Parents are encouraged to attend the high school nights at McAuliffe.

### **Students with Disabilities in Charter Schools: Notice of Rights to Access and Equity of Educational Services**

**Dear Parent:** This document explains the educational rights of students with disabilities to attend Massachusetts charter schools and to receive appropriate special education services in those charter schools. Both federal and state law requires that admission to a charter school be conducted without regard to or consideration of whether the child has a disability, and so charter schools are open to all students, whether or not they are eligible to receive special education services. Charter schools must provide special education services, up to the limits specified under the state charter school law, to all eligible students. This is a summary of your student's rights to attend and receive needed services from his or her charter school.

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❖ **Charter schools accept and serve students with disabilities.**

Charter schools are open to all grade-eligible students within the school's service area on a space available basis. If more students apply than there are available spaces, a lottery is held to randomly determine who will be admitted. All students who wish to attend a charter school have an equal chance of getting in regardless of, and without any consideration of, any need for special education services.

See: M.G.L. c. 71 §89 (l) states that charter schools shall be open to all students, on a space available basis, and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, homelessness, national origin, creed, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, or proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, and academic achievement. (Emphasis added)

- ❖ Charter schools must ensure that your student receives special education services if the student has been determined to be an eligible student with a disability by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team.

Charter schools must ensure that students with disabilities receive the special education services to which they are entitled. The services may consist of special education instruction and related services in the least restrictive environment, or consist only of related services needed to access the general education curriculum. The amount and location of services (where services will be delivered) is determined by the student's IEP team and is documented in the student's IEP. As determined by your student's IEP team, your charter school will provide services in a placement that is:

- Full inclusion- the student is in the general education classroom for 80%-100% of the school day; or
  - Partial inclusion- the student is in the general education classroom 40-80% of the school day; or
  - Substantially separate- the student is out of the general education classroom more than 60% of the school day.
- ❖ Your student must receive related services if the IEP team determines the student needs them.

Charter schools must provide related services to students with disabilities if the IEP team determines that the services are necessary for the student to benefit from special education or, if the student does not require special education instruction, that the related services are necessary to ensure the student's access to the general education curriculum. Examples of these services include: speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, psychological counseling, and/or adjustment counseling.

- ❖ **Charter schools are required to meet the needs of qualified students with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, even if the student is not eligible as a student with disabilities under federal and state special education laws.**

Charter schools are required to provide a free appropriate public education to qualified students with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. Such education consists of general education accommodations and related aids and services designed to meet the individual educational needs of students with disabilities as adequately as the needs of students without disabilities are met. An appropriate education for a student with a disability under Section 504 regulations could consist of education in general education classrooms with accommodations, education in general education classes with supplementary services, and/or related services. Schools would include these services in a "504 Plan."

- ❖ **For students who may require special education services that are beyond what the charter school is required to provide, an IEP team meeting will be convened to arrange for provision of needed services.**

If the IEP team convened by the charter school believes that your student may require a full-time day or residential special education program, the charter school will convene a separate placement meeting to determine the appropriate placement. You will be invited to the meeting, as will the school district of the town where you reside. When the meeting occurs, the placement team must first consider whether the school district of residence has an in-district program that is able to provide the services that are recommended by the IEP team, either alone or as a supplement to services available at the charter school. If there is such in-district programming available, the placement team must propose an in-district program to the parent (which may be delivered in the charter school itself, through a program located in the school district of residence or a combination of both), the student will remain enrolled in the charter school, and the charter school retains programmatic and financial responsibility for the student. Please note that the charter school has full discretion over where it will propose to deliver any in-district programming, and is not required to contract with the school district of residence for service delivery unless the charter school chooses to do so.

If the placement team, including the school district of residence, agrees that the student cannot be served in-district, then the placement team shall determine that the student requires an out-of-district placement, in which case the student's enrollment and responsibility for the student's special education program reverts to the school district of residence.

Because enrollment at the charter school is always voluntary on the part of the parent, the parent may elect to disenroll from the charter school and enroll, instead, back at the school district of residence or another school for any reason and at any time. However, the charter school may not require the parent to disenroll as a condition for receiving any service, except when the student's special education placement has been determined, as above, to be an out-of-district program.

See: Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2014-5: Charter School Responsibilities for Students with Disabilities Who May Need an Out-of-District Program - 603 CMR 28.10(6)

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/2014-5ta.html>

### **Relevant Laws and Regulations**

Charter School Statute: G.L. c. 71 §89

Charter School Regulations: 603 C.M.R. §1.00

Massachusetts Special Education Law: G.L. c.71B

Massachusetts Special Education Regulations: 603 C.M.R. §28.00

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 USC 1400 et seq; & 34 CFR Part 300

If you have any questions, please contact the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Office of Charter Schools and School Redesign (phone: 781-338-3227; email: [charterschools@doe.mass.edu](mailto:charterschools@doe.mass.edu)) or Office of Special Education Planning and Policy Development (phone: 781-338-3375; email: [specialeducation@doe.mass.edu](mailto:specialeducation@doe.mass.edu)).

For additional information regarding special education and the rights of parents and students, please refer to the following:

- Notice of Procedural Safeguards <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/prb/>
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### **Inclusion, Accommodations, & Modifications**

Almost one half of McAuliffe's core classes are inclusion classes co-taught by a special educator and a general educator. Both teachers are responsible for the delivery of instruction and classroom management. Accommodations are provided and modifications are made for scholars with accommodations or modifications described in their IEP or 504 plan. Inclusion services are provided by special education teachers and inclusion assistants.

Special education and general education teachers collaborate to plan differentiated lessons and provide accommodations and modifications to instruction and curriculum. Accommodations typically include use of graphic organizers, repeating instructions, use of visuals, word processing, preferential seating, breaks, and environmental accommodations such as exercise balls as chairs and use of headphones. Most accommodations are available to all scholars whether or not they have an IEP or 504. Some students also have specific accommodations included in their IEPs that teachers are responsible for implementing. Special education teachers track student progress toward goals and report on goals in trimester progress reports to families. Teachers also participate in the IEP meetings (annual or re-evaluations) in order to report on progress and give input to plan adjustments or write a new plan in the case of a re-evaluation.

### **Sub-Separate Classes**

As needed, students participate in sub-separate classes taught by a special educator in a small group environment, providing specialized instruction. These classes are most often designed for students whose needs in reading, writing and math are so great that they are not able to access curriculum or make progress in the general education setting. For these students, the Team determines that the student will need a more restrictive environment with modified content and methodologies. Teachers use the curriculum maps and processes that all general education teachers use to design alternate curriculum.

### **Learning Center**

Some students with IEPs participate in a Learning Center in order to receive specialized instruction targeting specific skills outlined within IEP goals. Learning Center is considered a more restrictive setting and, for this reason, McAuliffe has identified that we do not place students into Learning Center when similar support and/or instruction can be gained within the context of a supported general education classroom. Students who participate in a Learning Center typically do not participate in a World Language class.

### **Other Services**

The school is responsible for providing agreed upon service delivery for all of our scholars. Sometimes service delivery is provided by a school employee and other times the school contracts with providers. The school employs a Speech and Language Pathologist, a School Adjustment Counselor, and a Reading Specialist who provide direct services for students. Additional, specialized services (e.g. occupational therapy, physical therapy) are provided by contracted providers, as needed.

## Section 504

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, commonly referred to as “Section 504”, is a nondiscrimination statute enacted by the United States Congress. The Act was amended in January 2009. The purpose of the Act is to prohibit discrimination and to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to nondisabled students.

Section 504 describes an individual with a disability as a person who: (i) has a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity; (ii) has a record of such an impairment; or (iii) is regarded as having such an impairment” [34 C.F.R. §104.3(j)(1)]

## Annual Meetings

The 504 Team meets annually to discuss the child’s 504 plan. The 504 Team consists of the 504 liaison, a general education teacher, and the parents. At this time, the Team meets to discuss what accommodations are needed in order for the student to successfully access education, as well as to look at the student’s progress, considering the accommodations currently in place.

## Evaluations

Children on a 504 Accommodation Plan can receive an evaluation every three years, however this is not mandatory to continue to stay on a 504 plan. If you would like your child to have an evaluation completed and they are currently on a 504 plan, please make a request to your child’s 504 liaison (the grade level guidance counselor).

## Dual Eligibility Evaluations

Some students will be eligible for educational services under both Section 504 and the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). Students who are eligible under the IDEA have specific rights that are not available to students who are eligible solely under Section 504.

Evaluation to determine eligibility for a 504 Accommodation Plan must be of sufficient depth to determine eligibility and appropriate, reasonable accommodations to support access. The district may ask families to provide medical information from private medical providers for the purpose of more effective planning and decision making. No accommodations will be held contingent upon receiving such documentation. The provided Assessment Report will be completed annually and the provided Education History Report will be completed, at least at the initial assessment stage and thereafter if deemed necessary by the Team. If it is determined that standardized assessments beyond those given as part of standard school or district wide assessment are necessary, they will be identified on the Consent for Evaluation Form. For impairments that are medical in nature, the school nurse must be involved in the assessment, collaboration with family practitioners and eligibility/accommodations decision making process.

A Section 504 Accommodation plan will outline all accommodations necessary to provide students with an opportunity to access education in a manner commensurate with non-disabled peers.

## English Language Learners

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Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71A defines an English Language Learner as “a child who does not speak English or whose primary language is not English and who is currently not able to perform ordinary classroom work in English.” As required by Chapter 71A, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related federal statutes, educational services for English Language Learners (ELL) are based on the individual needs of the student. Professional staff assesses student needs and develops strategies and interventions and services which will enable the student to acquire language skills and access the educational curriculum.

Services provided to English Language Learners are designed to minimize barriers to educational services and extracurricular activities and to provide an appropriate education in the least restrictive learning environment.

## **English Language Learners in Charter Schools: Notice of Rights to Access and Equity of Educational Services**

**Dear Parent:** This document explains the rights of children who are English language learners to attend and receive language support and other services in Massachusetts public charter schools. As defined in state law, an English language learner is a student who does not speak English, or whose native language is not English, and who is not able to do ordinary classroom work in English. This includes students who, without language support services, would have trouble understanding lessons in school, or completing work in school because they are still learning English. In this document, an English language learner will be referred to as an “ELL.” Charter schools must accept and enroll ELLs admitted through the lottery who wish to attend the school. The school must provide direct instruction to help ELLs learn the English language, and subject matter instruction (for example, science or history) that is presented in English using strategies that help the student better understand the content. Full and equal access to the programs and services offered at the school must be made available to ELLs. This is a summary of your child’s rights to attend and receive language support and other services from his or her charter school.

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### **❖ Can my student who is an ELL go to a charter school?**

Yes. Charter schools are open to all students within the school’s service area, on a space available basis. If more students apply than there are available spaces, a lottery is held to choose who will be admitted in a fair way. All students who wish to attend a charter school have an equal chance of getting in and have an equal right to attend.

See: M.G.L. c. 71 §89 (l) states that charter schools shall be open to all students, on a space available basis, and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, homelessness, national origin, creed, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, or proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, and academic achievement. (Emphasis added)

### **❖ What if I don’t want language support services for my student?**

If you opt-out of language support services for your student, the school still has to make sure that your student has “meaningful access” to the curriculum and can effectively participate in the classroom work. Your student should be placed with a classroom teacher who holds a Sheltered English Immersion Endorsement, or an English as a Second Language license, which means that the teacher has had training on the language needs of ELLs. The charter school has the continued responsibility to monitor your student’s progress as an ELL. If it appears that he or she is unable to participate effectively and meaningfully in his classroom, the school must reconsider the instruction that it provides.

Upon identifying a student as an English learner, the charter school will provide the parent or guardian with its ELL policies and all needed forms in a language that they can understand.

### **❖ My student will need help learning English. What language support services will be made available at a charter school?**

Students in charter schools must have access to the same services they would receive if they were in any other Massachusetts public school. If your student is admitted to a charter school, you should expect that the school will conduct a home-language survey and test your student to determine if he or she needs language support services. If language support services are needed, the school must provide them.

Under Massachusetts law, students who are identified as ELLs are generally provided a Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) program and receive English as a Second Language instruction (ESL). This requirement applies to all public schools including charter schools, regardless of the number of ELLs enrolled at the school. ELL programs must have two components:

- **Sheltered English Immersion.** Sheltered English immersion includes teaching in a way that will make the content of lessons more understandable, and using ways of teaching that will help the student learn the English language. Sheltered English Immersion classes must be taught by specially trained teachers, and must address the same curriculum as the other students receive.
- **English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction.** ESL instruction provides specific, direct instruction in the English language that is delivered by a licensed ESL teacher. ESL is meant to teach students English language, grammar, vocabulary and usage, and includes instruction in speaking, listening, reading, and writing at a level the student can understand. Students of different ages and language groups may be included in the same ESL classroom. The hours of ESL instruction provided to your student will depend on how well your student speaks, listens (understands spoken English), reads, and writes English.
- ❖ **What other programs and services might my student receive if he or she attends a charter school?**

As in every public school in Massachusetts, ELL students must be given full and equal access to the programs and services of the school. Information and notices to ELLs and their parents must be provided in a language they can understand.

- ELLs must receive support such as guidance and counseling, in a language they can understand.
- ELLs must not be separated from students who are not ELL students except when necessary in order to provide their English learning program.
- ELLs must be allowed to participate fully in all academic courses.
- ELLs must be taught to the same academic standards and curriculum as other students.
- ELLs must have equal access to all programs and services at the school including Title I, Section 504 disability accommodations, and special education, and all clubs, student organizations, activities and sports teams.

#### **Relevant Laws and Regulations:**

Charter School Statute: G.L. c. 71 §89

Charter School Regulations: 603 C.M.R. §1.00

Massachusetts law-- English Language Education in Public Schools: G.L. c.71A

Massachusetts Education of English Learners Regulations: 603 CMR 14.00

Federal Civil Rights Law: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Federal Civil Rights law: Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974

Federal law: ESEA/ NCLB: the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 Governs elementary and secondary education. NCLB is available as Public Law 107-110 Title III — Language Instruction for Limited

English Proficient and Immigrant Students: PART A: 'English Language Acquisition, Language

Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act'

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If you have any questions, please contact the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Office of Charter Schools and School Redesign (phone: 781-338-3227; email: [charterschools@doe.mass.edu](mailto:charterschools@doe.mass.edu)) or Office of English Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement (phone : 781-338-3584; email: [ell@doe.mass.edu](mailto:ell@doe.mass.edu)).

For additional information regarding ELL education and the rights of parents and students, please refer to the following:

- Office of Civil Rights Enforcement Office: phone: 800-421-3481; email: [ocr@ed.gov](mailto:ocr@ed.gov); website: [www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/)
- State regulations: 603 CMR 14.00: Education of English Learners Regulations-- 14.06: Parental Right of Enforcement <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr14.html?section=06>
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## Intake and Identification Process

All families complete a Home Language Survey upon their enrollment in the school. For each family that identifies as speaking another language as a primary language at home, the school's ELL coordinator reviews the student learning profile (previous academic testing, ACCESS for ELLs proficiency score, cumulative file) and communicates with the family and previous school, as needed. The ELL coordinator seeks to identify whether the student is on target with his/her learning or struggling. Those demonstrating grade level proficiency are screened out. The ELL coordinator communicates with the family to discuss the scholar's learning history as well as to conduct the WIDA assessment to determine if there are English language learning barriers keeping the student from making adequate progress.

The ELL teacher uses parent / student interview and WIDA assessment to make a recommendation for ELL service delivery and goals. Families have an opportunity to refuse the delivery of ELL services, but the school strongly recommends that families opt into the learning experience in order to support strong English Language development in preparation for complexity of texts and writing assignments that they will face in middle and high school.

It is possible that McAuliffe may have reason to re-classify scholars as eligible to receive EL services after scholars have been determined by the sending district that they will no longer need services.

## ELL Instruction

McAuliffe supports identified English Language Learners (ELL) through direct English as a Second Language (ESL) service provided by a full time ELL teacher who also coordinates the program. Level of service is tailored to the individual needs of the students, and ranges from inclusion services to more substantial pull-out services for students requiring the most support. McAuliffe's ELL teacher employs a supplementary curriculum aligned with grade level content and WIDA standards. All identified ELLs also participate in ACCESS testing; results are used to inform programmatic improvements as well as service delivery for the school's ELLs. All ELLs are taught by general educators with their SEI endorsement.

## Translation Services

The school provides translation services for parent-teacher meetings, IEP meetings, and other activities, as needed. The school is also building internal capacity to translate written materials into Spanish and Portuguese, including the weekly newsletter.

# Education of Homeless Youth

Christa McAuliffe Charter School (McAuliffe) is committed to ensuring that Homeless Children and Youth have equal access to the free, appropriate public education as provided to other students who attend McAuliffe. McAuliffe shall fulfill this commitment in accordance with the provisions of the federal McKinney Vento Homeless Education Act. McAuliffe policies must strive to eliminate barriers to Homeless Children and Youth succeeding in school.

"Homeless Children and Youth" are defined as those students who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence or have a primary nighttime residence in a supervised, publicly or privately operated, shelter for temporary accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill), an institution providing temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized, or a public or private place not designated for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings. The definition of Homeless Children and Youth includes:

- Children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
- Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;

- Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- Unaccompanied youth – a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian; a youth who is homeless; and a youth not in the custody of a state agency.

A fixed residence is one that is stationary, permanent, and not subject to change. A regular residence is one which is used on a regular (i.e., nightly) basis. An adequate residence is one that is sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments.

### **Enrollment of Homeless Children and Youth**

McAuliffe must strive to inform Homeless Children and Youth of their educational rights, enroll them in school, and coordinate the services necessary to ensure their success. Homeless Children and Youth may enroll themselves or be enrolled by a parent, non-parent caretaker, older sibling, a caseworker, or designated liaison. McAuliffe shall admit any homeless student who enrolls at McAuliffe as McAuliffe would any other student, even if they do not have the documents usually required for enrollment, such as school records, medical records or proof of residency. If a Homeless Child or Youth arrives without records, McAuliffe must assist the family, parent, or guardian and contact the previously attended school system to obtain the required records.

Enrollment shall mean a Homeless Child or Youth attending classes and participating fully in school activities, classes, educational opportunities, meals, social and athletic events, clubs, teams, and other services. Further, McAuliffe, along with the homeless student's district of temporary residence, shall provide transportation to all Homeless Children and Youth to and from school. McAuliffe must ensure that all Homeless Children and Youth are able to participate in Federal, State, or local food programs as soon as possible.

The fact that a Homeless Child or Youth has an Individual Education Plan (IEP) may not be used to delay the student's enrollment or attendance, and such IEP shall be promptly implemented. Though the Massachusetts immunization statute, G.L. c. 76, § 15 generally requires students to provide proof of immunization prior to enrollment, the federal McKinney Vento Homeless Education Act overrides the state immunization law. However, it should be noted that the immunization law allows, in the absence of a Department of Health declared epidemic or emergency, the enrollment of students who have not been immunized if they have religious objections to immunization. If a Homeless Child or Youth arrives lacking immunizations or immunization or medical records, McAuliffe has the responsibility to obtain relevant academic records, immunizations or immunization or medical records and to ensure that the Homeless Child and Youth are attending school while the records are obtained.

## **Learning Targets, HOWLs, and Grading**

### **Learning Targets and Ongoing Assessment**

Scholars are guided to focus on successfully meeting long term and supporting learning targets that demonstrate essential skills and knowledge. Scholars are regularly assessed to both inform future instruction and measure scholar progress and achievement. The form of assessment varies depending on instructional goals but routinely includes both formative and summative assessments.

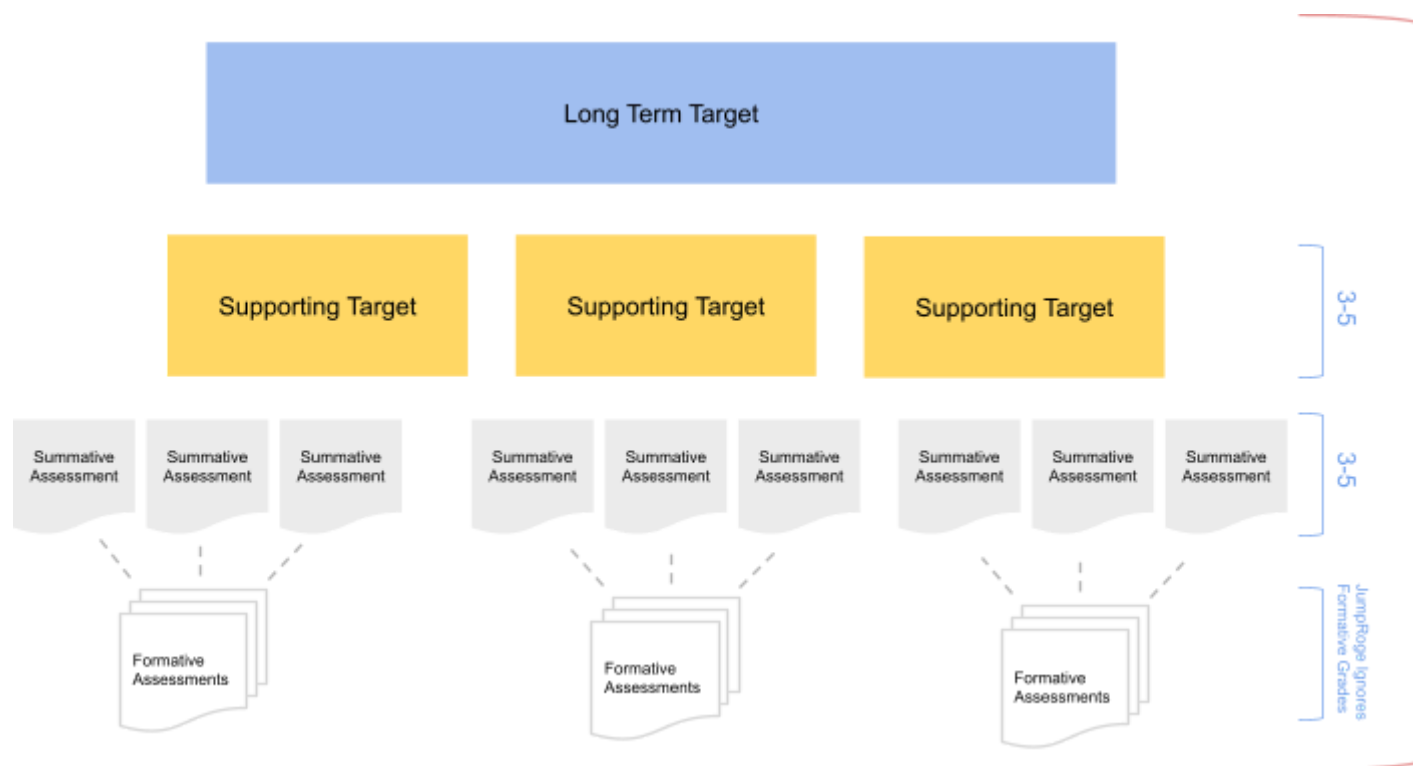
Scholars are regularly assessed by their teachers in order to determine the next steps to improve scholar learning and to evaluate the extent to which the scholar has developed a mastery of the target. Scholars are expected to reflect on their own work and create long as well as short term goals for themselves. Assessments that show growth are gathered by the scholar in his/her portfolio in order to build a "body of evidence" that showcases the scholar's growth over time.

## Learning Targets and Assessments

Learning targets are scholar-friendly goals for lessons, projects, units and trimesters. Each trimester, scholars work hard to meet long term learning targets that are broken down into supporting learning targets. Academic progress reporting is focused on a scholar’s progress toward meeting the target.

The diagram below shows the relationship between long term and supporting learning targets and the two types of assessments tracked in Powerschool. Imagine having 3-5 pieces of evidence that inform understanding of a scholar’s progress on a supporting target. These pieces of evidence happen over the course of several weeks and build on each other. Teachers track scholar achievement in Powerschool for these summative assessments (assessments of learning) which, in turn, provides scholars and families a snapshot of progress. Meanwhile, teachers use formative assessments (assessments for learning) along the way, helping scholars know where they are at and helping teachers make instructional decisions/adjustments based on scholars’ needs.

Scholars regularly engage in self-assessment of their progress toward their long and supporting learning targets (aligned with Common Core State Standards). They use classwork and rubrics to self-assess and build their “body of evidence” to demonstrate the progress that they made toward the target.



## Habits of Work and Learning

In a standards-based grading system, habits of work and learning (commonly referred to as HOWLs), are assessed separately from other types of learning targets. By distinguishing these essential habits from academic achievement, teachers, students and families have a clear sense of students’ strengths and needs. Studies examining the relationship between habits and achievement indicate correlation between high achievement and strong habits and vice versa.

McAuliffe’s Habits of Work and Learning are: Perseverance, Responsibility, Collaboration, and Inquiry. Our fifth HOWL, Kindness, is taught and celebrated but not formally assessed in Powerschool.

### PERSEVERANCE

I can do my best work by using a growth mindset.

### COLLABORATION

I can contribute to a common goal through my actions and thinking.

**RESPONSIBILITY**

I can be a “leader of my own learning.”

**INQUIRY**

I can ask questions and consider multiple perspectives.

**KINDNESS**

I can treat others with compassion and empathy.

**Standards-Based Grading**

“A pitcher practices her rise-ball for days, and a lot of the time the ball flies over the catcher’s head or ends up in the dirt. But all that matters is whether the pitch is effective in a real game. ‘What seems so logical and implicit in the athletic and performance arena is often foreign in schools,’ say the authors. ‘Teachers often weigh practice and performance equally.’ For example, if a scholar gets a C in homework and an A on the test, many teachers would average the two to give a final grade of B. This is crazy, they argue. What counts is mastery when it counts.” - Marshall Memo, April 26, 2010

McAuliffe is a standards-based grading school. This means that we measure scholars on progress toward mastery of learning targets that are aligned with the Massachusetts Core Curriculum Frameworks and Common Core State Standards.

**Guiding Principles for Grading and Reporting**

Expeditionary Learning communicates six principles that guide McAuliffe’s Grading and Reporting practices:

- 1) Character/Habits of Work targets are important; however, progress toward these measures are determined and reported separately from progress about scholars’ academic achievement.
- 2) Final/synthesized academic grades describe scholars’ progress toward a set of long-term learning targets in a specific and consistent way.
- 3) Grades reflect a scholar’s current level of achievement.
- 4) The purpose of grades is to communicate about achievement (not to motivate or punish).
- 5) Teachers let scholars know learning targets up front, and involve scholars in communicating about their progress toward them.
- 6) Provide scholars with multiple opportunities to make and show progress toward long-term learning targets.

**Progress Indicators**

Teachers use the following terms when assessing scholar progress according to their evidence of learning:

**Beginning (B)** is earned when a scholar’s work does not demonstrate progress towards the learning targets by the established deadline but needs more time to achieve competency. This may mean that a scholar has not met the majority of the supporting targets as well as the criteria for the long term learning target. This may also mean that there has not been a sufficient body of evidence collected.

**Approaching (A)** is earned when a scholar’s work shows progress towards meeting the learning targets by the established deadline but needs more time to achieve competency. This may mean that a scholar has met the majority of the supporting targets and the majority of the criteria for the long term learning target.

**Meeting (M)** is earned when a scholar's work fundamentally meets the learning target being assessed and the assessment requirements. It is competent work that demonstrates the essential skills and knowledge for that grade level or course. This means that the scholar has met the criteria for the learning target (e.g., in the rubric) as is demonstrated in the body of evidence. This is a rigorous standard and a passing grade.

**Exceeding (E)** Scholars who demonstrate mastery of a learning target may have opportunities to go deeper in their learning by developing even more expertise than what the learning target calls for. Over time, McAuliffe teachers will integrate the use of "Exceeding" as a fourth progress indicator. This indicator will be used sparingly in order to avoid grade inflation, and faculty will work together to build a common understanding of what "Exceeding" looks like at McAuliffe.

## Communicating with Families about Learning

### Summary

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Effective communication about scholar learning involves ongoing communication between scholars, families, and teachers. Please review the following information to learn about how your communication with your child and your child's teachers can benefit his or her learning as well as what the parent/guardian role is in this communication.

### McAuliffe Resources

[mcauliffecharter.org/resources](https://mcauliffecharter.org/resources)

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McAuliffe Resources is the hub for family and scholar resources. Teachers update homework online and families can access the online gradebook, called PowerSchool. Scholars can log into their own McAuliffe Accounts to access their Google accounts which includes: email, Google Drive, and calendaring functions. We highly encourage you to bookmark [McAuliffe Resources](https://mcauliffecharter.org/resources) so that you can access it easily and regularly!

### Online Gradebook: PowerSchool

<https://mcauliffecharter.powerschool.com/public/>

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The best way to be informed of your child's progress is by setting up a family log-in to the school's grading program, called PowerSchool. Families will create their own username and a password to the PowerSchool Portal. This portal account remains constant throughout your time at McAuliffe. Families are able to add multiple students to their account so that they can view information for each of their children in one location. Students will be assigned a unique username and password for the portal. One of our goals is to guide scholars to own their own learning so it is critical that they can log into the PowerSchool Portal at anytime to see their progress in each class.

Teachers are responsible for updating their online gradebook weekly so that it accurately reflects scholar progress in learning as well as helps families identify and respond to situations such as assignments not getting turned in.

We recommend that families set up regular time per week or every other week (evening, weekend morning, etc.) in order to review progress. Rather than families driving this process, we encourage you to empower your child to be in the driver's seat. Have your child log in and give you a tour of the gradebook. Have him/her give you updates on what's going well and what's not going well in his/her classes. These check-ins can be comparable to a less formal and more brief Scholar Led Conference.

Remember, the final grade will not be an average of the assessments, but a measure of proficiency at the end of the trimester. Please do not be discouraged if the beginning assessments are Beginnings (Bs) or Approaching (As) as long as towards the end they begin to display Meetings (Ms) and maybe even an Exceeding (E).

## Progress Reports

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Progress reports will be sent home with your scholar three times per year, once at the end of each trimester. Please refer to the school calendar for specific dates. This report will include information on each scholar's current academic standing as well as HOWLS. As families use PowerSchool with scholars at the helm, you'll find that the report card is simply a snapshot of Powerschool at the end of the Trimester. Please, stay up to date and check in with your child using PowerSchool weekly or bi-weekly!

### **Sample dialogue between parent/guardian and child during PowerSchool Check-In:**

Adult: It's Wednesday so let's go check out PowerSchool before we have dinner.

Child: Ok, I'll go log-in. We had to hand in some assignments this week so they might not be graded yet. We can still talk about the other stuff though.

Adult: sounds good. You log in and take a look at each of your subjects and then give me a quick update for each subject!

**\*\*Child logs in to PowerSchool \*\***

Adult: You ready?

Child: Yup, logged in. There's some new stuff in here for you to see -- and some Meetings! Yay!

Adult: Awesome -- I'm ready for you to share whenever you are!

Child: Gives updates on each class -- what's going well, areas for improvement, stuff that might be missing from the gradebook because the teacher needs to update.

Adult: Thank you so much for giving me this update. I'm so impressed with your growth in ELA and Math!! As you've made your way through the trimester, a lot of those Approachings have turned into Meetings showing that you're making great progress.

Adult: Can we talk briefly about science? I noticed that there are more Approachings there than in your other subjects. How is science going?...

Child: Well, ya. Those chemistry assignments were really hard. I still get mixed up between what's a chemical reaction and what's a physical change. I'm starting to get it, but need more practice and examples.

Adult: And how about that lab report that looks like it is missing. I saw you working on it last week.

Child: I was mostly done with it but forgot to include the pre-lab and charts that I made.

Adult: What are you doing about that?

Child: I met with Mr. Ward today and got it all organized and handed in so it should show up graded in PowerSchool soon. My HOWLS will probably get impacted though because I didn't hand in the lab on time.

Adult: That makes sense. Next time, what are you going to do to make sure that you have all the pieces of your report to hand in when the report is due?

Child: Use the checklist or rubric that Mr. Ward gave me and double check to make sure I have everything ready to hand in together.

Adult: Sounds like a good plan. Let me know if you want me to help you with the double-checking, okay? Your HOWLS, after all, are just as important as your learning target grades! If I handed in a report to my boss and it was missing some pieces, I could be at risk of losing my job...keep that in mind, okay!

Other than that lab, it looks like things are going well in your classes! Keep it up!

Child: Thanks! I will!

## Student Led Conferences

[Student Led Conferences \(SLC\)](#)

[Scholar Learning Targets for SLC](#)

[Sample SLC Agenda](#)

[Parent/Guardian Role](#)

[Tips for Parents/Guardians](#)

[Sample Questions to Ask](#)

[SLC Resources](#)

[Goal-Setting](#)

### Student Led Conferences (SLC)

The mission of McAuliffe Student Led Conferences is to cultivate an authentic practice of reflection. Scholars will develop confidence, organization, communication, and presentation skills that promote success in middle school, high school, and beyond. Preparation for SLCs is woven into the fabric of daily life at McAuliffe. SLCs invite family members to partner with students as they develop and showcase greater self-awareness.

All McAuliffe students and families are expected to participate in two SLCs per year -- typically in November and April. SLCs are meetings between a student, parent(s)/guardian(s), and the Crew Leader about the student's learning and growth. Though the Crew Leader is in attendance, the student facilitates the conference. Students prepare for SLCs during Crew.

### Scholar Learning Targets for SLC

- I can set and work towards goals, while honestly assessing my progress.
- I can explain my progress towards meeting the learning targets in my academic subjects.
- I can share examples and evidence from specific assignments in my academic subjects.

### Sample SLC Agenda

1. Introductions
2. A report on academic progress in each class
3. An update on Habits of Work and Learning
4. Showcasing three portfolio pieces (a most rewarding piece, a most challenging piece, and a piece of work that shows growth)
5. Discussion about academic and character goals
6. Respond to questions from parents/guardians.

### Parent/Guardian Role

- ★ Schedule the conference with your child's crew leader.
- ★ Arrive on time to the conference with your child.
- ★ Listen first! Be willing to let your child speak.
- ★ Actively participate by asking clarifying questions during the conference and probing questions when invited to do so toward the end of the conference.
- ★ Give input to your child's academic and character goals; Support these agreed upon goals
- ★ Help your child make progress toward academic and behavioral goals by supporting their progress at home.

## Tips for Parents/Guardians

- ★ Express positive interest and anticipation for your child's conference.
- ★ Recognize that scholars need to develop independence in communicating progress; this takes time and practice.
- ★ Listen to your scholar and ask clarifying questions if your child says something that you don't understand.
- ★ Write down probing questions and topics to return to with your child toward the end of the conference.
- ★ Ask these questions or ask to return to certain topics (subjects, pieces of work, goals, HOWLs) at the end of the conference.
- ★ Express pride in your child's growth and progress. Be positive, offering to help in areas where improvement is needed.
- ★ Help your child identify growth from one year to another that his/her crew leader may not be aware of.

## Sample Questions to Ask

- ★ Will you tell us more about what's challenging for you in \_\_\_\_\_?
- ★ Can we take another look at that piece of work you are proud of?
- ★ If there's one thing you want to focus on between now and December (or June if spring SLC) what is that?
- ★ How do you feel you've grown from last year to this year?
- ★ Can we talk more about your goals? How can I/we support you?
- ★ What subject do you feel is most difficult for you? Why? How do you think I could help you in this subject?
- ★ I think the goal you suggested is right on target. What can I/we do to support you?
- ★ That's an interesting goal that you suggest. I'm wondering how relevant that goal is for you...
- ★ How do you feel you've grown from last year to this year?

## SLC Resources

Follow the links below for more information for families:

- [Powerpoint Presentation](#)
- [Handout](#) with Note-Catcher
- Watch a Video about Student Led Conferences: <http://vimeo.com/43992569>

## Goal-Setting

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In crew, students will set an academic goal, a personal goal, and will collaborate with crew members to set crew goals. Students will use progress report information to help name academic goals. Students learn to write S.M.A.R.T. goals, because they must be:

- **Specific:** Students must identify explicit objectives they plan to achieve.
- **Measurable:** We need to be able to measure progress somehow.
- **Achievable:** Goals must be realistic.
- **Relevant:** Goals need to be realistic and relevant to a student's life.
- **Timely/Time-bound:** Students set deadlines for meeting parts of the goal and the entire goal.

Students will work with their crew leaders to develop evidence of tracking progress toward these goals. While tracking progress does imply that the student takes actions to make some progress, it is not mandatory that all students actually reach their goals. Tracking progress and thoughtfully considering the impact of their actions on their level of success is where students learn about how to be self-directed.

# Portfolios, Passages, & Graduation

## Portfolios

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Each McAuliffe scholar organizes a portfolio, mostly during Academic Crew. These are used to prepare for Student Led Conferences and Passages. A portfolio is a collection of work showing what a student has been thinking about, working on, and learning to do. It may contain written work, artwork, recordings of performances, photographs of three-dimensional constructions, and more. A portfolio does not include all work; instead it is a selection made by the student with teacher help. The purpose of the portfolio is to give an ongoing record of:

- how a student’s thinking about significant issues and questions has grown
- how a student’s range of knowledge and skills has developed
- effort made to achieve worthwhile goals, including reflection on and revision of work

## Passages

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Passage presentations are an EL Education core practice where scholars, using specific evidence and reflection, make the case for why they are ready to transition to high school. Passages are formal presentations that take place in front of a panel, composed of an authentic audience.

At McAuliffe, students complete their Passages presentation at the end of 8th grade. Because Habits of Work and Learning are critical to students’ success in school and career, HOWLS are used as the organizing principle for the presentation. Passages focus on growth: we know that a growth mindset is crucial to students’ success. Therefore, students use their Passages presentation to prove the basic claim, “My growth in HOWLS over the course of my time at McAuliffe shows that I am ready to go on to high school.” Students share their Passage Presentation before an audience that includes peers, at least one McAuliffe teacher who knows them well, and at least one adult who knows them less well or not at all.

## Passages and Graduation

McAuliffe students must Meet or Exceed Passages in order to graduate. A rubric articulates these expectations and will be used to evaluate the Passages. Students may Meet, Exceed, or Not Meet Passages. If they do not meet the expectations for Passages, they will have an opportunity to revise their presentation so it meets expectations. If students still do not meet Passages expectations, they will not be able to participate in McAuliffe’s graduation. Students who Exceed Passages requirements will be recognized at graduation.

# Standardized Assessments

## Standardized Assessments and Expeditionary Learning

“Assessments of learning (summative assessments) are part of a balanced system of assessment in Expeditionary Learning schools. Summative assessments fulfill the role of measuring student progress and reflecting the level of student learning at a particular point in time. The results of such assessments have a variety of uses, including informing teachers about the effectiveness of instruction...” EL Core Practices, p58

## Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS)

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All McAuliffe scholars are expected to participate in the state standardized testing (MCAS) each spring. McAuliffe scholars participate in the online testing for sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. Results are reported to the school and to families, typically in the fall following the spring testing. For more information about MCAS from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education please go to <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/parents/>.

## Standardized Testing Accommodations

Students with IEPs and 504 plans receive the standardized testing accommodations named in their plans and which are allowed by the testing protocol.

## MCAS Frequently Asked Question

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### What is the purpose of the MCAS?

- MCAS results are one way to help parents/guardians and educators gauge scholars' progress from year to year.
- Results help educators identify scholars who may be in need of extra support and those who are making significant gains.
- Educators and school leaders use MCAS results to help identify strengths and weaknesses in curriculum and instruction as well as to analyze how different subgroups in our school are performing.
- Test results are also used by the state to monitor school and district performance, to report on academic performance to people like the governor, and help the state target additional resources to underperforming schools.
- At the high school level, a minimum passing score on MCAS is a requirement for graduation. At the middle school level, it can be beneficial for scholars to have exposure to this exam before it is high-stakes for individual students.

### How does McAuliffe use the MCAS results?

At McAuliffe, we use the MCAS results in a number of ways -- and always as one data point among many! MCAS results help us:

- Evaluate McAuliffe's curriculum and instruction and our program's alignment to the state standards; Identify curricular strengths and weaknesses and name priorities for improvement.
- Identify school-wide professional development goals and individual teacher and leader goals
- Monitor the progress of every student in the school and identify students who may not be making the progress we'd like to see; The results along with teacher recommendations help us form intervention lab classes.
- Evaluate our special education and English learners programs and identify goals for improvement
- Demonstrate the school's academic success to the DESE charter school office (a really important part of charter school accountability: "with increased autonomy comes increased accountability")
- Demonstrate student achievement to EL Education as a required part of our application to become an EL credentialed school

### How is McAuliffe preparing scholars for computer-based testing?

- Scholars taking computer-based testing will participate in a series of brief tutorials/practice tests that will acquaint them with the online testing platform.
- School leaders and teachers will all take the tutorial and practice tests. This helps us identify specific strategies for interacting with the online platform that we will teach students during the tutorials. Some tools and suggestions are specific to ELA (e.g., notepad) and some are specific to math (e.g. equation editor). Some are helpful tools/strategies to use on an online test (e.g., answer eliminator).
- Teachers also integrate sample MCAS questions and problems, aligned to the content that teachers are already teaching, into day to day instruction.
- To familiarize yourself with last year's computer-based 8th grade tests and tutorials, [click here](#).

### Are students required to take the MCAS?

- All public school students are required to participate in the MCAS as it is a mandatory part of the curriculum. The data is most helpful when every single student takes the test and puts forth his/her best effort.
- In addition, passing the 10th-grade MCAS is a graduation requirement. So, at a minimum, the annual MCAS prepares students for the 10th-grade assessment. (10th graders who refuse to take MCAS jeopardize their high school diploma.)
- Finally, it is worthwhile noting that schools with lower than 95% participation may have their accountability status lowered. Over time, shifts in our accountability status can have an impact on the level of autonomy we have as a school.

### What can I do to mentally prepare my scholar for the MCAS?

- Ensure your child has a nutritious dinner the night before MCAS and breakfast the day of. Maybe have your child help you pick out special pre- and post-MCAS breakfast, lunch, and dinner -- meals he/she will enjoy eating that will also keep him/her energized. NOTE: Scholars will not be able to snack during testing so eating breakfast to get him/her through the morning is key!
- Remind your scholar that there is no time limit to the MCAS so he/she really can take his/her time. This is especially important to remind 8th graders since they'll be taking the computer-based test, which scholars tend to move through more quickly than paper-based.
- Remind your scholar that what matters is that he/she tries his/her best and answers every question, even if now and then it is a guess. There will likely be some questions that are easier and some that are harder. That's normal. Some questions will be familiar and some unfamiliar. That's normal too. What matters is that your child puts in his/her best effort and answers every question. A guess is better than a blank!
- Say things that are affirmative and that support EFFORT:
  - o "I know that you're going to put in your best effort and that's awesome!"
  - o "I'm so proud of you and the effort that you put into today's reading/writing!"
  - o "You did it!" "Bravo" "High five" "Let's go celebrate your effort with..."

### Is there anything else I should know?

- Every scholar should bring in a reading book or drawing/coloring material in case they finish the test before the allotted time. After handing in their tests students can read, draw/color, or rest. E-Readers, however, are NOT allowed to be used in the testing room.
- Preview with your scholar that he/she will need to turn off and put all electronics in his/her backpack. This includes Apple Watches, cell phones, e-readers, etc
- Make sure your child arrives at school on time.
- If your scholar is sick, have him/her stay at home!! A truly sick scholar will not be at full cognitive capacity to take the test. There will be make-up days for scholars who are sick on the day of the scheduled test.
- Do not schedule any doctor or dentist appointments the day of a test; The last thing you want is your child focused on having to finish in time to get his/her cavity filled!
- All Massachusetts public school students are required to participate in the MCAS; it is a mandatory part of the curriculum. The data is most helpful when every single student takes the test and puts forth his/her best effort. In addition, passing the 10th-grade MCAS is a graduation requirement. So, at a minimum, the annual MCAS prepares students for the 10th-grade assessment.

## Awards, Prizes, and Scholarships

### Special Thanks And Recognition (S.T.A.R.) Awards

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Special Thanks and Recognition awards are given to scholars who have exceeded expectations in displaying their commitment to one or more of the design principles and core values. STAR awards are presented at monthly Grade Level Meetings by teachers and students.

### End of Trimester Academic Awards

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#### HOWLs Awards:

Two types of HOWLs awards are distributed at the end of each trimester: HOWLs Awards and HOWLs Improvement Awards. **HOWLs Awards** are given to scholars who were Meeting on each HOWLs target in each of their classes at the end of the trimester. **HOWLs Improvement Awards** are given to scholars who made substantial gains on their HOWLs targets from the previous trimester to the current trimester. For the first trimester of the year, only seventh and eighth

graders receive the award, based on HOWLs improvement from Trimester 3 of the previous year to Trimester 1 of the current year. We use progress report data to determine which scholars will receive these awards.

### **Content Area Awards:**

Each teacher or pair of co-teachers also has the opportunity to identify one scholar to receive a Content Area Award for strong performance or improvement in a specific subject area

### **8th Grade Core Value Awards**

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Prior to the annual graduation ceremony for 8th graders, all 8th-grade scholars have the opportunity to recognize four graduates who exemplify McAuliffe's Core Values. The awards are determined by a vote where students in the class each submit one ballot identifying two individuals per Core Value who consistently uphold or model McAuliffe's Core Values. The school tallies the results and determines which scholar (or scholars in the case of a tied vote) will receive the award presented at graduation.

### **Humanitarian Award**

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In the spring, students and teachers have an opportunity to nominate a member of the McAuliffe community (student or employee) to receive a Humanitarian Award. The Humanitarian Award may be given to a McAuliffe community member who exemplifies the intersection of caring and service. This is a person who works on behalf of underserved communities. They raise awareness and complete projects. Their impact is felt on the McAuliffe community and possibly beyond. There is a nomination process which includes the nominator writing a submitting a description about the individual. Nominations are reviewed by the school's Culture Team which makes a recommendation to the Executive Director. This award is distributed at either the 8th-grade graduation ceremony or at the final community meeting (depending on the recipient's grade).

### **Jennifer Kirkpatrick Award**

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The Jennifer Kirkpatrick Award is given to honor a scholar who exhibited vast improvement in their self-knowledge, self-reflection, self-care, and perspective-taking. Jennifer Kirkpatrick worked as McAuliffe's Adjustment Counselor between January 2016 - July 2018. She was well loved by scholars and dedicated to seeing them improve themselves. There is a nomination process which includes the nominator writing a short essay about the individual he/she is nominating. There is a nomination process which includes the nominator writing a submitting a description about the individual. Nominations are reviewed by the school's Student Support Team which makes a recommendation to the Executive Director. This award is distributed at either the 8th-grade graduation ceremony or at the final community meeting (depending on the recipient's grade).

### **Review of Award Processes**

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The school annually reviews processes for selecting and distributing awards to students and to faculty in order to ensure that they are free of restrictions based upon race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness consistent with the requirements of federal and state law. This involves monitoring the characteristics and demographics of students receiving awards. The school's Director of Student Culture annually reviews processes and reminds faculty of the need to ensure that awards are distributed based on academic performance and/or academic improvement.

### **Non-Discrimination Statement**

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The Christa McAuliffe Charter School (McAuliffe) may not and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness. (M.G.L. c. 71, § 89(m); 603 CMR 1.06(l)). For questions about compliance or to communicate a grievance, please contact the individuals listed below who together serve to coordinate compliance under Title IX and Section 504.

John Ermilio  
Director of Business & HR  
508-879-9000x616  
[jermilio@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:jermilio@mcauliffecharter.org)

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Michelle Arons  
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Noel Green  
Executive Director  
508-879-9000x613  
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## Scholar Groups

### Scholars Leading Scholars

At McAuliffe, we like to say that scholars are “leaders of their own learning.” There are currently two formal groups that take place during the school day and which provide scholars with opportunities to develop leadership skills and to positively influence the culture and climate of the school. Additional groups may be created on an ad hoc basis.

- **Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA):** The GSA is a group led by scholars and faculty advisors to create a safe space for scholars of all sexual orientations and gender identities. Scholars discuss, learn, educate, and act on topics relating to the LGBTQ+ community and its allies. The GSA is open to all scholars and faculty and currently meets every other Friday during Afternoon Crew. Scholars do not need permission from families to participate.
- **Student Culture Team (SCT):** Incorporating scholars in the proactive building of school culture is critical to a successful anti-bullying campaign. The SCT, facilitated by the Culture & Character Coach and school counselors, focuses on decreasing patterns of negative behavior (rumors, drama, gossip) and increasing scholars being upstanders who treat one another with kindness and respect. The team also focuses on creating a positive school environment by bringing spirit and pride to the school. Members of the team may mentor other scholars in the school who are having a difficult time and become trained in peer mediation to help peers solve conflicts. Scholars must apply to be selected for the Student Culture Team the selection process entails reviewing the scholar’s application along with recommendations from his/her teachers. The Student Culture Team meets during Goal Block, so typically two or three days per week for 45 minutes each. The team plans spirit weeks, a spring social event, grade level meetings, community meetings, culture days, etc.

## High School Transition

### Overview

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Families with 8th-grade scholars receive regular updates from the school’s counselor regarding high school transition information. Towns also post information on the district website. 8th-grade families need to be tuned-in to information coming from both McAuliffe and the district.

Many students return to the district public school for high school. Others attend Keefe Regional Technical School, Norfolk County Agricultural High School, and other independent schools. Since our students apply to and attend many different schools, it is critical that families plan ahead and communicate with the grade level school counselor early in the year, especially if you aim for your child to apply to independent schools.

McAuliffe will send out a survey in the fall asking families to share with the school anticipated plans for your child’s high school. The information helps the school’s guidance counselor, teachers, and leaders effectively support families during any application processes during the winter as well as enrollment processes in the spring.

## Access to Counselors

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8th-grade students in the school have access to a school counselor assigned to their grade. The 8th-grade school counselor plays the most active role in supporting scholars and families through the high school selection and transition process. In addition, the Director of Student Services and Special Education Coordinator are resources for families of scholars who have IEPs.

Scholars or families may request to meet with a counselor through email or phone. Counselors will also post sign-ups at certain times during the year. Counselors will make a good faith effort to follow up with the student and/or family as soon as possible. As needed, the counselor will consult with other members of faculty and/or the student's parents.

The school communicates how to get in touch with the school counselors in the Communication section of the handbook and via [www.mcauliffecharter.org/contact](http://www.mcauliffecharter.org/contact).

## Independent School Application Procedures

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Families considering sending their scholar to an independent school for high school are strongly encouraged to have their child take the SSAT test in the spring or summer of 7th grade so that if tutoring is required to target certain areas of learning, that can happen prior to taking the test again in the fall.

Families asking the school to submit applications to independent schools must send all forms to the school in an organized package addressed to the guidance counselor. We ask families to submit application materials by a specific date in December each year. The forms should be clearly marked and organized for distribution. Please include a cover letter that identifies the applications included and due dates. Finally, please include correctly addressed and stamped envelopes for each school.

## High School Course Selection

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8th-grade teachers make course recommendations for students entering high school. Each district/high school also has its own set of courses for 9th-grade students (e.g. some districts have students take biology in 9th grade and others have students take chemistry), and each district has a distinct process and forms that need to be filled out. McAuliffe spends a lot of time building relationships with high schools so that we can best recommend students for the appropriate courses.

After teachers make recommendations, students enroll in the courses either fully aligning the registration with the course recommendations or in part. Some teachers may recommend an honors course but a student may opt into a college prep course instead. The school counselor guides students to consider classes and extracurricular opportunities based on each student's interests, abilities, and skills.

As scholars prepare for specific programs -- such as the Joseph P. Keefe Regional Technical School (Keefe) -- that have a vocational component, the counselor ensures that students attending Keefe Tech build a strong understanding of the various options they have in "shop" and which allow for students to pursue occupations nontraditional for the student's gender. All students in the 8th-grade visit and tour Keefe where they learn about all of the "shops" and the school's academic program.

The school does not conduct any testing in order for students to place into high school courses. Rather, the school makes recommendations for courses based on student completion of coursework at McAuliffe. However, some high schools required scholars to take placement tests in order to be placed into certain courses, e.g., an advanced math class.

## High School Transition for LEP Students/Families

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The school's Family Engagement Coordinator supports the school counselor to ensure effective communication with limited English proficient students and their families regarding the high school transition process. This includes ensuring that students and their families know about the options the student has for high school (public, technical, and private) and providing guidance on the application and/or course selection process(es). The ELL Coordinator communicates directly with the schools receiving his/her caseload of students to ensure that the student's courses are aligned with

his/her learning needs and to ensure the school is prepared to provide uninterrupted delivery of services and instructional support.

## Annual Review of Counseling Processes, Procedures, and Materials

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This includes the delivery of counseling services related to high school transition and course selection. The school counselor annually works with his/her supervisor, Director of Culture, to review high school transition processes which ensure that counseling processes, procedures, and materials are free from bias and stereotyping on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, and homelessness.

For questions about compliance or to communicate a grievance, please contact the individuals listed below who together serve to coordinate compliance under Title IX and Section 504.

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## School Safety

### Safety Program Policy

It shall be the policy of the Board of Trustees to guard against accidents by taking every possible precaution to protect the safety of all students, employees, visitors and others lawfully present on Christa McAuliffe Charter School (McAuliffe) property, present online/virtually, or at McAuliffe-sponsored events.

The Board of Trustees shall ensure compliance with any and all applicable safety requirements established by law, regulation, or government agency directive. The practice of safety will also be considered a facet of the instructional program of the school.

McAuliffe's administration shall have overall responsibility for the safety program of the school. The Executive Director is responsible for keeping appropriate staff members informed of current applicable state and local requirements relating to school safety.

### Supervision of Students

At all events under the purview of or sponsored by McAuliffe, whether held on school premises or other location, and whether attended exclusively or in part by students of McAuliffe, a member of the school staff shall be in attendance and shall be responsible for the preservation of good order and shall remain in charge until all students have left the building.

### First Aid Policy

First aid is defined as the immediate and temporary care given in case of an accident or sudden illness, which enables the child to be taken safely home or to a physician. It does not include diagnosis or treatment.

McAuliffe attempts to provide a safe environment for its students, employees, and visitors. If an accident or sudden illness occurs, McAuliffe's nurse shall administer first aid and, if warranted, call Emergency Medical Services.

McAuliffe administration, in consultation with the McAuliffe nurse, shall develop procedures for the proper handling of an injury to, or sudden illness of a child or staff member. These shall be made known to the staff and shall incorporate the following:

- We endeavor to have the McAuliffe nurse or another trained person responsible for administering first aid.
- McAuliffe shall offer annually an Emergency Bystander first aid course. The course shall meet the minimum requirements of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.
- When the nature of an illness or an injury appears in any way serious, every effort shall be made to contact the parent/guardian and/or family physician immediately.
- No student who is ill or injured will be sent home alone.
- The McAuliffe nurse, or McAuliffe administration, may make arrangements for emergency services for an injured or ill student, contacting parent or guardian in advance if at all possible.

### **Accident Reporting**

Regardless of whether a student, employee, and/or visitor is injured, all accidents which occur on McAuliffe's property or at McAuliffe-sponsored activities shall be reported to the appropriate McAuliffe administrator immediately after the accident. McAuliffe administration shall complete, or cause the completion, of McAuliffe's "Incident Report" form.

### **Buildings and Grounds Security Policy**

The Board of Trustees believes it to be in the best interest of the community to provide security and protect the school's assets.

Security means more than having locks and making certain that doors are locked at the proper times. Security also means:

- Minimizing fire hazards;
- Reducing the possibility of faulty equipment;
- Keeping records and funds in a safe place;
- Protection against vandalism and burglary.

It shall be the policy of the Board of Trustees to protect school sites, site facilities, buildings and building contents against attempts at vandalism, destruction, or unlawful entry. The Board of Trustees authorizes and directs school administration to develop and implement a program of security for the school buildings, building contents, and site facilities. School administration is authorized to institute, as deemed desirable, the use of electronic surveillance devices and the use of security services to safeguard school buildings, where appropriate in compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

School administration shall be responsible for maintaining control of keys to access the school, and shall be responsible for the use of the school by any staff.

Following a reasonable time after the official opening of school, all school doors must be secured from the outside to prevent unauthorized entry to school buildings, and all individuals entering the building after the beginning of school must report first to the school administration office.

### **Toxic Storage Policy**

In the course of carrying out its academic mission, it is recognized that certain hazardous materials are used and stored in McAuliffe's building. These materials include, but are not limited to, materials used in academic programs such as science labs, art programs, and technology programs, as well as in building maintenance functions. In order to ensure student

and staff safety, McAuliffe shall follow all applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations in the use, storage and disposal of all hazardous materials.

### **Fire Prevention**

Fire prevention measures shall be administered in compliance with the state safety code, the directives of the state fire marshal, and in cooperation with the local fire department. This includes participation in evacuation drills at least two times during the school year.

It shall be the responsibility of the McAuliffe administration to see that all staff members are kept informed of current applicable state regulations and the directives of local fire department officials.

When McAuliffe's property is in use for purposes unrelated to school programs, those in charge of the building at the time, as detailed in a facilities use agreement, shall be responsible for compliance of the users with district fire prevention measures.

The local fire department shall also be notified directly of all incidents of fire regardless of whether the services of the fire department were required.

### **Policy Concerning Emergency Medical Plans**

McAuliffe's Director of Business, and Operations is responsible for developing and maintaining a written emergency medical response plan to reduce the incidence of life-threatening emergencies and to promote efficient responses to such emergencies.

The plan shall include:

- A method for establishing a rapid communication system linking all parts of the school, including outdoor areas, to the emergency medical services system and protocols to clarify when the emergency medical services system and other emergency contact people shall be called;
- A determination of emergency medical service response time to any location on campus;
- A list of relevant contacts and telephone numbers with a protocol indicating when each person shall be called, including names of professionals to help with post-emergency support;
- A method to efficiently direct emergency medical services personnel to any location on campus, including to the location of available rescue equipment;
- Safety precautions to prevent injuries in classrooms and on the facilities;
- A method of providing access to training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first aid for teachers, athletic coaches, trainers, and other McAuliffe staff; and
- The location of the automated external defibrillator device and those personnel who are trained in its use.

The plans shall be developed in consultation with the Director of Culture, McAuliffe's nurse, McAuliffe's athletic director, coaches, and local police, fire, and emergency personnel, as appropriate.

McAuliffe shall practice the response sequence at the beginning of each school year and periodically throughout the year and evaluate and modify the plan as necessary. McAuliffe's Director of Student Services shall review the response sequence with local fire and police officials at least one time each year and shall conduct periodic walk-throughs of campus. Plans shall be updated in the event of new construction or physical changes to the school facility as determined by the local police department.

McAuliffe's Director of Student Services and Director of Business and HR review the [model plan](#) developed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education prior to developing the McAuliffe plan.

Plans shall be submitted once every three years to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the local police department, and the local fire department on or before September 1. Plans shall be updated in the event of new construction or physical changes to McAuliffe's school facility as determined by the local police department.

Included in each initial and subsequent filing of a medical emergency response plan, McAuliffe shall report on the availability of automated external defibrillators, including, the total amount available, the location of each within McAuliffe's premises, whether or not the device is in a fixed location or is portable, those personnel or volunteers who are trained in its use, those personnel with access to the device during regular school hours and after and the total estimated amount of automated external defibrillators necessary to ensure campus-wide access during McAuliffe hours, after school activities and public events.

### **Emergency Preparedness**

McAuliffe's Executive Director and Director of Business and Operations will be responsible for developing, communicating, and practicing school-based emergency plans. These plans will include but not be limited to fire drills, evacuation procedures, and lockdown drills.

### **Emergency Preparedness for Fieldwork**

For emergency protocols pertaining to fieldwork, please refer to the fieldwork policy.

### **Emergency Closings**

McAuliffe's Executive Director may close the school or dismiss students from school early in the event of hazardous weather or other emergencies that threaten the health or safety of students and personnel. While it may be prudent, under certain circumstances, to excuse all students from attending school, to delay the opening, or to dismiss students early, McAuliffe's Executive Director has the responsibility to see that as much of the administrative, supervisory and operational activity is continued as possible.

In making the decision to close the school, McAuliffe's Executive Director shall consider many factors, including, but not limited to:

- Transportation availability (e.g. If Framingham is closed, there will be no bus transportation for McAuliffe students)
- Weather conditions, both existing and predicted;
- Driving, traffic, and parking conditions affecting public and private transportation facilities;
- Pedestrian safety;
- Actual occurrence or imminent possibility of any emergency condition that would make the operation of school difficult or dangerous; and
- The inability of teaching personnel to report for duty, which might result in inadequate supervision of students.

McAuliffe's Executive Director shall weigh these factors and take action to close the school only after consultation with public safety authorities, transportation companies, and school officials from the districts that send students to McAuliffe. Students, parents, and staff are informed through the school's emergency alert system which communicates by phone call, text message, and email. The school also posts notification through social media outlets. When McAuliffe is closed for emergency reasons, staff members will comply with administrative directives in reporting for work.

## **Security Camera Policy**

The Christa McAuliffe Charter School supports the use of video cameras throughout the campus for the purpose of enhancing school safety and security. Our goals are to promote and foster a safe and secure teaching and learning environment for students and staff, to ensure public safety for community members who visit or use our school property, and diminish the potential for personal and district loss or destruction of property.

### Signage and Notification

1. Appropriate signage will be posted at major entrances to the school building that notify students, staff and the general public of the use of security cameras. Students and staff will receive additional notification at the beginning of the school year regarding the use of security cameras in the schools, on school buses and on school grounds. Such notification will include, but not be limited to, employee handbooks and student handbooks.

### Camera Placement

1. The security camera system is installed in public areas only. These areas may include school buses, grounds, entrances or exits to school buildings, hallways, and main entries.
2. Restrooms, changing rooms, private offices and nurse's offices are excluded from security camera use. Likewise, security camera usage is prohibited in any space where there is a reasonable expectation for privacy.

### Use of Video Recordings

1. The Executive Director or designee shall oversee video surveillance.
2. The Christa McAuliffe Charter School Security Camera System will be in operation and may be monitored by authorized school personnel throughout the calendar year.
3. There will be no monitoring of live recordings, except in the case of a suspected health or safety emergency.
4. Reviewing the recordings will occur only when a suspected incident is committed inside or outside the building (e.g. vandalism, graffiti, etc.).

### Data Storage

1. All video recordings are stored in a secure place to avoid tampering and ensure confidentiality in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Recordings will be saved for three weeks, which is consistent with state law and the requirements for record retention.
2. Information obtained through video surveillance may only be used for disciplinary investigations. The school may disclose video surveillance information regarding a student to law enforcement personnel in connection with a health or safety emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.
3. Any video recordings used for security purposes on school buses, in school buildings or grounds are the sole property of the Christa McAuliffe Charter School. Viewing of such videos will be made only as permissible pursuant to applicable law and with the permission of the Executive Director or his/her designee. Audio recordings may generally not be disclosed or released except pursuant to applicable law, including but not limited to, Mass. Gen. L. [272, §99](#) and 18 U.S.C. § 2511.

## Damage to School Property Policy

Any student who accidentally or otherwise **damages/vandalizes/defaces any school property**, whether fences, gates, trees or shrubs or any building, or any part thereof, or break any window glass or injure or destroy books, electronic equipment, instruments, apparatus or furniture belonging to the Christa McAuliffe Charter School shall be liable to pay in full for all damages, including replacement costs, if necessary. The student may be subject to disciplinary consequences.

For the purposes of this policy, "school property" includes anything owned, leased, rented, or distributed by the school to its students.

# After School Programming

[Enrichment Program](#)

[Sample Enrichment Classes and Clubs, and Teams](#)

[Outing Club](#)

[Athletics](#)

[Behavior Expectations & Consequences](#)

[Pick Up](#)

[Cancellations](#)

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[Translation of Materials](#)

[Access and Equity](#)

## Enrichment Program

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McAuliffe's Enrichment Program provides scholars with opportunities to participate in a variety of activities, clubs, and teams. There are three 11-week sessions per year (fall, winter, spring) and program offerings every afternoon so that many of our scholars participate in more than one offering.

Classes, teams, and clubs are led by teachers, parents, and other community members. The program is led by the school's Enrichment Coordinator, Be Perron, [bperron@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:bperron@mcauliffecharter.org)

## Sample of Possible Enrichment Classes and Clubs, and Teams

Creating	Performing	Playing with Purpose	Moving
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Acrylic Painting</li> <li>- Writer's Workshop</li> <li>- Lego Robotics</li> <li>- Mosaics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- McAuliffe Band</li> <li>- Shakespeare Performance</li> <li>- Broadway</li> <li>- Glee Club</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Magic the Gathering</li> <li>- Role Playing Game Club</li> <li>- Board Game Club</li> <li>- Marvel Movie Club</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Multi-sports</li> <li>- Outing Club</li> <li>- Rock Climbing</li> <li>- Yoga</li> </ul>

Current Enrichment information can be found at [www.mcauliffecharter.org/enrichment](http://www.mcauliffecharter.org/enrichment). Families will be required to sign their student up for the program and pay fees prior to attending. Unpaid fees before programming will automatically remove your student from their classes. Students will not be allowed to participate in additional programs throughout the year if fees are unpaid.

## Athletics

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McAuliffe participates in the Middle School Charter School Athletic Conference and competes in the following: soccer, cross country, girls basketball, boys basketball, flag football and track & field. Athletes must try out for the soccer, flag football, and basketball teams. Cross country and track are typically open to any athlete who wants to participate.

The program is led by the school's Athletic Coordinators, Jamie Sharrow, [jsharrow@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:jsharrow@mcauliffecharter.org), and Carolyn Reardon, [creardon@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:creardon@mcauliffecharter.org). The Coach of each team will serve as the primary point of communication with families and will frequently need parent/guardian support with carpooling to and from practices and games/meets.

There is a fee to participate on a team. Fees are assessed annually based on the cost of transportation, referees, league fees, equipment, uniforms, and field/court space. The school's Business office supports coaches receiving sponsorships and in-kind donations from local businesses whenever possible.

Students who experience injuries of any kind, including but not limited to concussions, must report these to their coach and the school nurse. There are strict guidelines the school needs to follow with regard to head injuries, in particular. Please see the concussion policy for more information.

## Behavior Expectations & Consequences

---

Students are expected to follow McAuliffe's behavior school-wide norms and rules for all after-school programming. **If a participant does not follow norms, rules, or demonstrates poor sportsmanship or disrespectful behavior directed toward peers or adults, consequences will be assigned per the school's discipline policy.** Consequences may include a student athlete being required to sit out of a series of practices/competition, losing the opportunity to play on the team, and/or to participate in afterschool enrichment programming.. Please see the discipline policy for more information.

## Pick Up

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Students should be picked up at the end time of the activity or practice. Pick up takes place at the door of the facility where the class is located unless otherwise noted. Students who have permission may walk home, or to another location.

## Cancellations

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Families will be notified of class/practice/game/outing cancellations by email, or if the cancellation is sudden, by phone alert. If we are unable to contact a family, the student will sit in on an alternate class (in the case of Enrichment).

## Absences

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If a student is absent from school he/she may not participate in afterschool programming that day. This includes off-site practices and games.

When a student attends school, but will not be attending Enrichment Class, please notify the Enrichment Coordinator of the planned absence.

## Communication/Recruitment Methods

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The school communicates with families about after school Enrichment Programming via the school's primary methods of communication: Friday newsletter, daily student announcements, social media, direct emails, and text blasts, as needed.

Coaches will communicate directly with families of scholars participating in athletics teams. Please be in touch with the coach directly if you have any questions about practices, games, or transportation.

## Translation of Materials

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In order to ensure that the after school activities are accessible to all students, the school provides translated materials for the school's Spanish and Portuguese speaking families. In the case that another low-incidence language is spoken by a family with limited English skills, the school works with UMASS Translation Center to have the materials translated.

## Access and Equity

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The school's Enrichment Coordinator and Athletics Coordinator annually review the school's processes to ensure that sports and clubs do not limit access on the basis of race, sex, gender identity, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or homelessness.

Crew leaders and counselors also encourage students to participate in after-school programming as a way to increase student involvement in the school community. Through optional programming, we see great value in students participating in team sports, service groups, performing and visual arts, and after-school academic support via peer tutoring or executive functioning support.

In order to assess equal access to all programs including athletics and other extracurricular activities, McAuliffe's Enrichment Coordinator and Athletics Coordinator prepare the following information for review by a team including the Enrichment Coordinator, Executive Director, and Director of Business and Operations:

1. Names of students who are part of their organization, activity or team
2. Names of students who expressed interest, tried-out, or auditioned for their organization, activity, and team
3. Reasons, if known, why students may have decided not to continue their participation with the organization, activity or team

The review team identifies any notable patterns, draws conclusions related to accessibility, and identifies resolutions for identified issues.

## Student Records and Directory Information Policy

[FERPA & Student Records Overview](#)

[Notification of Rights under FERPA](#)

[FERPA Directory Information Notice](#)

[Processes and Procedures](#)

[Record Release](#)

[Staff Training](#)

### FERPA & Student Records Overview

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The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act is a federal law that provides two basic rights to parents in regards to student records:

1. The right to inspect and review their child's educational records
2. The right to prevent unauthorized persons from seeing the same records

Massachusetts student record regulations are designed to ensure parents' and students' rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment, and destruction of student records, and to assist school authorities in carrying out their responsibilities under state and federal law.

To request records please send a written request to the attention of Abby Lyons, Office Manager, [alyons@mcauliffecharter.org](mailto:alyons@mcauliffecharter.org).

### Notification of Rights under FERPA

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The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Massachusetts Student Records Regulations afford parents and students over 14 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

(1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records. Access is generally provided within 10 days of the request. State law sets forth specific procedures prior to the release of records to a non-custodial parent (M.G.L. c. 71, §34H).

Parents or eligible students should submit to the School official a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. Upon request, copies of any information contained in the student record will be furnished to the parent or eligible student, subject to a reasonable copying fee.

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA or state law.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend a record should write the School Executive Director, clearly identify the part of the record they want to be changed, and specify why it should be amended. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

(3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA and state law authorize disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

(4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school district to comply with these legal requirements.

Complaints may be filed with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), 75 Pleasant St., Malden, MA 02148 and/or the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20202-5901.

### **FERPA Directory Information Notice**

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The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that McAuliffe, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, McAuliffe may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the School to the contrary in accordance with School procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow McAuliffe to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;

- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as roster for cross-country, soccer, basketball, or track

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent’s prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, McAuliffe may disclose “directory information” to a third party mail house for a public school district (e.g. Framingham).

If you do not want McAuliffe to disclose directory information from your child’s education records without your prior written consent, the parent/guardian must notify the school by completing the information disclosure form included in the back to school forms sent to families over the summer. McAuliffe has designated the following information as directory information:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| ● Student’s name   | ● Photograph and video image           |
| ● Participation in officially recognized activities and sports | ● Degrees, honors, and awards received |
| ● Address  | ● Date and place of birth              |
| ● Telephone listing  | ● Dates of attendance                  |
| ● Electronic mail address                                      | ● Grade level                          |

## Processes and Procedures

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The school stores all student records in locked filing cabinets that only certain school staff have access too. Teachers and leaders may request to view specific files, but the review takes place in the student file room.

### Record Release

McAuliffe releases student records when presented with a record release form signed by the parent of the student in order to facilitate that student’s entrance into a new school.

### Staff Training

Annually, at the start of the school year, school personnel are trained on the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and the state's requirements for information privacy and confidentiality under M.G.L. c. 71, s. 34H, and 603 CMR 23.00.

More information can also be found about state regulation 603 CMR.23:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr23.html>.

## Title IX Policy

### A. Purpose

This Policy is established by Christa McAuliffe Charter School in adherence with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”) and all applicable Massachusetts statutes and regulations. Title IX prohibits Christa McAuliffe Charter School from discriminating on the basis of sex (including sexual harassment and sexual violence) in all facets of its educational programs and activities.

This Policy applies equally to all of Christa McAuliffe Charter School’s students, employees, authorized volunteers, parents, and other members of the Christa McAuliffe Charter School community. This Policy applies to conduct at school, at school events, and away from school in all other instances when Christa McAuliffe Charter School has a duty to investigate.

## **B. Notice of Non-Discrimination**

Christa McAuliffe Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, ethnicity, age, disability, veteran, genetic information, or marital status in the delivery of its education programs and activities, and indeed, Christa McAuliffe Charter School is required pursuant to Title IX not to discriminate in such a manner. If any member of the Christa McAuliffe Charter School community has any questions or concerns with respect to this Policy and/or Title IX, he/she may contact Christa McAuliffe Charter School's Title IX Coordinator and/or the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights. Christa McAuliffe Charter School's Title IX Coordinator is identified within this Policy and shall be available to answer all questions concerning this Policy.

McAuliffe's policy of non-discrimination in its educational programs and activities extends to employment and admission considerations.

## **C. Definitions**

According to regulations promulgated under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, sexual harassment is conduct on the basis of sex that meets one or more of the following:

- An employee of the School conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the recipient on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
- Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the School's education programs or activities; or
- Sexual Assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking as defined by federal laws.

## **D. Title IX Coordinator**

The Title IX Coordinator's responsibilities shall include, but are not limited to:

- Coordinating Christa McAuliffe Charter School's compliance with Title IX, including Christa McAuliffe Charter School's grievance procedures for resolving Title IX Complaints;
- Drafting and publicizing procedures for reporting possible Title IX violations;
- Overseeing McAuliffe's prevention of and response to Title IX reports and complaints;
- Ensuring fair, equitable, and prompt resolution of complaints;
- Providing the complainant with the availability for supportive measures, considering the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures, informing the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint, and explaining to the complainant the process for filing a formal complaint;
- Identifying and addressing any patterns or systemic problems revealed by such reports and complaints;
- Providing confidential (to the extent possible) written reports to the Board of Trustees as requested, but at least once every 4 months. Reports shall be kept in a separate and secure Title IX file;
- Providing training to Christa McAuliffe Charter School's employees, authorized volunteers, and other members of the Christa McAuliffe Charter School community with respect to Title IX and Christa McAuliffe Charter School's implementation of this Policy.

The Title IX Coordinator shall understand and have knowledge of the Title IX requirements and Christa McAuliffe Charter School's own policies and procedures on sex discrimination, anti-bullying, anti-retaliation, school place violence, and sexual harassment. Christa McAuliffe Charter School shall require that the Title IX Coordinator, as well as investigators and adjudicators, be free of any conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents, generally, or an individual complainant or respondent. Any training materials for Title IX Coordinators, investigators, adjudicators, and

any person who facilitates an informal resolution process, must not rely on sex stereotypes and must promote impartial investigations and adjudications of formal complaints of sexual harassment.

Each and every report or complaint filed with Christa McAuliffe Charter School pursuant to Title IX or reasonably related to Title IX must be provided to the Title IX Coordinator to achieve his/her mission.

Effective upon adoption of this Policy by the Board of Trustees, the Title IX Coordinator shall be John Ermilio, Christa McAuliffe Charter School, 139 Newbury St., Framingham MA 01701, 508-879-9000 x616, jermilio@mcauliffecharter.org.

#### **E. Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment and sexual violence are prohibited and will not be tolerated. Christa McAuliffe Charter School expressly prohibits sexual harassment and sexual violence at school or by a student to another student; a student of or by a member of the staff; and/or of or by any other person who is any way associated with Christa McAuliffe Charter School. This Policy also prohibits sexual harassment and/or sexual violence by and among Christa McAuliffe Charter School employees and authorized volunteers. To this end, Christa McAuliffe Charter School commits its staff to the implementation of a comprehensive and preventive approach that addresses the underlying reasons for this behavior and helps to create a better school community that supports learning and teaching for students and adults.

#### **F. Grievance Procedure**

To facilitate the prompt and equitable resolution of any and all Title IX complaints, Christa McAuliffe Charter School will adopt and publish a grievance procedure in accordance with this policy and Title IX. For the purpose of Title IX complaints and investigations, Christa McAuliffe Charter School will apply a preponderance of the evidence standard of review.

#### **G. Reporting Responsibilities**

The Title IX Coordinator shall establish—and prominently publicize to students, employees, volunteers, and parents—procedures concerning how to report conduct believed to violate this Policy and how such reports will be acted on. The victim of conduct in violation of this Policy or reasonably believed to be in violation of this Policy, witnesses/bystanders to such actions, and/or anyone who has information that these actions have occurred may file a report.

Reports must be acted upon by those persons receiving the report and the Title IX Coordinator (upon receipt of a report), whether made orally or in writing. Knowingly filing false reports shall result in the taking of disciplinary measures.

All Christa McAuliffe Charter School employees shall report incidents of alleged violations of this Policy to the Title IX Coordinator as soon as they learn of or have actual knowledge of any conduct allegedly in violation of this Policy. Employees shall report all relevant details that the victim shared or that the employee observed, including, but not limited to, the names of the perpetrator and victim, the date, time, and location of the alleged conduct, and the circumstances surrounding the alleged conduct. **A Christa McAuliffe Charter School employee's failure to report a violation of this Policy of which he or she has actual knowledge shall result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment.**

Students who witness alleged violations of this Policy, or parents whose children inform them of alleged violations of this Policy, shall report incidents to the Title IX Coordinator. The victim shall not be disciplined for failing to report an alleged violation of this Policy. All reports from students or parents will be maintained in confidence to every extent possible.

Although Christa McAuliffe Charter School cannot discipline or sanction parents or guardians who elect not to report violations of this Policy, particularly sexual violence and/or sexual harassment, when they learn of any such conduct, Christa McAuliffe Charter School **strongly encourages** parents or guardians to contact the Title IX Coordinator as soon as

practicable with any and all relevant information that they receive. All reports will remain confidential, to every extent possible.

No individual who exercises their Title IX rights shall be subject to retaliation. Neither the school nor any person may intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in a Title IX investigation, proceeding, or hearing. Charges against an individual for code of conduct violations that do not involve sex discrimination or sexual harassment, but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or complaint of sex discrimination, or a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, constitutes retaliation. The school shall keep confidential the identity of complainants, respondents, and witnesses, except as may be permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"), or as required by law, or as necessary to carry out a Title IX proceeding. Complaints alleging retaliation may be filed according to the Grievance Procedures in this Policy. By filing a Title IX complaint, no student, employee, volunteer or parent making such a report shall extinguish his or her right to file criminal or civil complaints concerning the same conduct.

Upon receiving a credible report of an alleged violation of this Policy, Christa McAuliffe Charter School will take all necessary measures to ensure the safety all parties (e.g., separate the student-victim from alleged perpetrators; provide alternative schedules to one or both parties; provide necessary support services to the student-victim, etc.) and will provide the student-victim and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) with regular updates as to the status of the investigation. Christa McAuliffe Charter School shall implement appropriate interim supportive measures on a case by case basis and shall not rely upon any fixed rules related to any such measures. Christa McAuliffe Charter School will provide student-victims with the contact information for available resources outside of Christa McAuliffe Charter School, including but not limited to, victim assistance organizations, law enforcement, mental health services, legal assistance, and or counseling services.

If the respondent is a Christa McAuliffe Charter School employee and the complainant is a Christa McAuliffe Charter School student, Christa McAuliffe Charter School will report the alleged misconduct to the appropriate law enforcement agencies.

## H. Disciplinary Sanctions

**Students:** Disciplinary sanctions any violation of this Policy may include, but are not limited to, loss of privilege to participate in extracurricular activities including athletics and school social events; loss of school bus transportation; assignment of additional school work or community service; and—depending on the extent of involvement in the prohibited activity—suspension or removal from school.

**Employees:** Disciplinary sanctions for any violation of this Policy may include, but are not limited to, suspension, termination, or filing of criminal charges as warranted.

**Volunteers/** Disciplinary sanctions for any violation of this Policy may

**Parent:** include, but are not limited to, denial of access to school premises, school-related events, or school-sponsored events; suspension or termination of volunteer activities; or filing of criminal charges as warranted.

## I. Prevention

The Title IX Coordinator shall ensure that students and staff are instructed on how to identify, prevent, and report violations of this Policy. The Title IX Coordinator, in conjunction with the Board of Trustees, shall also ensure that McAuliffe's health program and counseling services include the appropriate social skills training to help students avoid isolation and help them interact in a healthy manner. School staff shall model correct and courteous behavior to each other, to students, parents and to visitors. Abusive or humiliating language or demeanor shall not be accepted

**J. Enforcement Agencies**

Nothing in this Policy is intended to prohibit or discourage individuals from contacting the applicable state and/or federal enforcement agencies with complaints or concerns, including but not limited to:

**Office for Civil Rights**

Boston Office U.S. Department of Education

5 Post Office Square

8th Floor Boston, MA 02109-3921

Tel: 617-289-0111 E-mail: [OCR.Boston@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.Boston@ed.gov)

**Equal Opportunity Employment Commission (EEOC)**

John F. Kennedy Federal Building

475 Government Center

Boston, MA 02203-0506

Tel: 800-669-4000 TTY: 800-669-6820

**APPENDIX A**

**Christa McAuliffe Charter School  
Title IX Grievance Form**

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Complainant's Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Last Name First Name Middle Initial

Home address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Last Name First Name Middle Initial

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Contact information \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Address

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Circle One: Student Parent on Behalf of Student Employee Volunteer

1. Alleged Perpetrator(s) (if more than one perpetrator, include information below on back).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Specifics of Complaint. Describe below, including any dates of alleged discrimination, identities of alleged perpetrators, and specific circumstances of alleged discrimination. Attach extra pages if necessary.

3. Witnesses. Include names, any known contact information, and brief description of each witnesses' knowledge of events. Attach extra pages if necessary.

4. Corrective Action. If you wish, please describe any corrective action you would like to see taken with regard to the alleged misconduct. Attach an extra page if necessary.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Complainant or  
Parent/Guardian on Behalf of Complainant

# Glossary

## **Authentic Audience**

An audience beyond the classroom teacher that helps scholars care about the purpose and quality of their work.

## **Crew**

Each scholar is assigned to a Crew before they begin their journey at McAuliffe. Scholars meet each day with their Crew leader (advisor) for check-ins, goal-setting (academic, personal, and social), building portfolios, preparation for student-led conferences, etc. There is Academic Crew which is focused on the portfolio building, SLC prep, and goal-setting and tracking and Team-building Crew which is time for group development activities, discussions, etc.

## **Culminating Events**

Each Learning Expedition ends with a Culminating Event, at which scholars share their learning with families, the extended McAuliffe community and invited guests. All scholars are expected to attend.

## **Community Meeting**

Adults and scholars work together to facilitate monthly community meetings at the MetroWest YMCA. (All students, faculty, and staff, walk to the YMCA once per month for this special event.) Community meeting facilitators engage the community in interactive activities that get scholars interacting with one another in a fun and engaging way. Community meetings are also a forum to recognize members of the School community by presenting HOWLs Awards after each of the three Trimester reporting periods and for scholars and adults to share public thank yous and apologies.

## **Craftsmanship**

“Doing things well”; In EL schools, teachers create craftsmanship targets to help scholars create high-quality work. Scholars revise their work and persevere to make their best even better.

## **Enrichment**

There are three opportunities for your child to participate in the McAuliffe Enrichment program that takes place after school according to a published schedule. Transportation home must be provided by parents/guardians or a carpool. Scholars who are eligible bus riders are able to take the 5pm late bus that is provided by Framingham Public Schools Transportation. Enrichment program information will be sent out to families during the weeks prior to the start of each session. Families must sign up for classes and clubs promptly as they do fill up.

## **Expeditionary Learning (EL)**

EL partners with schools, districts, charter schools, and states to build teacher capacity in service of a more ambitious vision of scholar achievement: one that joins academic challenge and scholarship to critical skills like perseverance, critical thinking, and an ethic of contribution to prepare scholars for success in college, career, and citizenship.

The EL model challenges scholars to think critically and take active roles in their classrooms and communities, resulting in higher achievement and greater engagement in school. EL provides schools with professional development, coaching, and online tools to improve curriculum design, instruction, school culture, leadership, and assessment practices. The national network of EL schools and professional colleagues includes more than 150 schools, 4,000 teachers, and 45,000 scholars.

## **Experts**

People skilled in a particular field of study. Teachers utilize experts to support authentic research, critique scholar’s work and provide guidance in expedition development. The EL approach encourages the regular use of experts in the classroom and in the field, not just as “presenters” but as active partners in enriching the quality of scholar’s thinking and work.

## **Fieldwork**

We distinguish fieldwork from “field trips.” During fieldwork, scholars are active researchers and not passive observers of a prepared experience. For example, a field trip might involve elementary school scholars taking a guided tour at a restored colonial village. Fieldwork, on the other hand, might have those scholars “apprentice” themselves to a particular craftsman at the village, helping with the work, interviewing, and taking photos, becoming an “expert” in that craft. Fieldwork in EL schools often involves service learning.

## **HOWLs**

HOWLs stands for Habits of Work and Learning. We anchor our schoolwide norms in these habits: Perseverance, Inquiry, Responsibility, and Collaboration. HOWLs targets are taught alongside learning targets and are assessed separately from academic progress.

## **Goal Block (Former Lab)**

Goal Block takes place three times per week for 45 minutes. During Goal Block, scholars receive targeted math, reading, and writing instruction based on their individual needs. For some scholars, Goal Block is an opportunity to extend learning and for others, it is a time for scholars to receive additional support, particularly if they are struggling to meet a learning target.

## **Learning Expeditions**

The major curriculum unit in EL schools. They are multi-subject studies, usually lasting 6-12 weeks, led by a teacher or teaching team. Learning Expeditions are based on state standards and local curriculum maps and focus on what teachers determine to be essential content and skills. They use interesting case studies to make content come alive for scholars. They involve scholars in fieldwork (field research) and service learning and connect them with local experts.

## **Learning Targets**

Goals or objectives for lessons written in concrete, scholar-friendly language. They are shared with scholars, posted in the classroom, and tracked carefully by scholars and teachers during the process of learning. Learning targets are most often written as “I can” statements. EX: “I can explain the lifecycle of a butterfly.”

## **Parent Teacher Group (PTG)**

PTG is McAuliffe’s parent teacher group. This group meets once a month to discuss ways that parents can support the school’s initiatives and augment the academic and social experience of the scholars.

## **Passages**

Passage presentations are an EL Education core practice where scholars, using specific evidence and reflection, make the case for why they are ready to transition to high school. Passages are formal presentations that take place in front of a panel, composed of an authentic audience.

At McAuliffe, students complete their Passages presentation at the end of 8th grade. Because Habits of Work and Learning are critical to students’ success in school and career, HOWLs are used as the organizing principle for the presentation. Passages focus on growth: we know that a growth mindset is crucial to students’ success. Therefore, students use their Passages presentation to prove the basic claim, “My growth in HOWLs over the course of my time at McAuliffe shows that I am ready to go on to high school.” Students share their Passage Presentation before an audience that includes peers, at least one McAuliffe teacher who knows them well, and at least one adult who knows them less well or not at all.

## **Portfolios**

A portfolio is a collection of work showing what a scholar has been thinking about, working on, and learning to do. It may contain written work, artwork, recordings of performances, photographs of three-dimensional constructions, and more. It can be used as a formative or summative assessment.

### **PowerSchool**

McAuliffe's online grade book. The best way to be informed of your child's progress is by setting up a log-in to the school's parent portal at <https://mcauliffecharter.powerschool.com/public/>. Families and scholars will each have a unique username and password. This way, you and your child can log into the system and use it collaboratively at home. PowerSchool is also accessible via a mobile app. One of our goals is to guide scholars to own their learning so it is critical that they can log into PowerSchool at any time to see their progress in each class.

### **Progress Reports**

You will receive three progress reports per year, one at the end of each trimester.

### **Projects and Products**

Scholar products are the tangible results of the expedition's learning and one of the ways scholars "show what they know" in EL schools. Formats include things like: scientific reports, field guides, blueprints, business plans, anthologies of writing, models, or instructional posters. Most products in EL schools are created for audiences beyond the classroom. Products are intended to increase motivation by engaging scholars in real work with authentic purpose, and they require scholars to apply key academic skills while thinking creatively and critically. Major EL projects are generally worked on in school, not as an out-of-school assignment, though they may involve homework.

### **Service Learning**

Active participation in organized experiences that meet authentic community needs. Service learning provides scholars with opportunities to use their acquired skills and knowledge in real-life situations, extending scholar learning into the community and instilling an ethic of stewardship. Service learning is not simply charitable work; the learning (linked to expedition content) is just as important as the service.

### **Standards-Based Grading**

McAuliffe is a standards-based grading school. This means that we measure scholars on their ability to meet specific standards articulated in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. At McAuliffe, we communicate the standards as learning targets that are written in scholar-friendly language. Learning targets are goals for lessons, projects, units and trimesters.

### **S.T.A.R. Awards**

Special Thanks and Recognition awards are given to scholars who have exceeded expectations in displaying their commitment to one or more of the design principles and core values. STAR awards are presented at School Meetings.

### **Student Led Conferences**

Student Led Conferences (SLCs) are designed to replace regular parent conferences. They are meetings between a scholar and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) about the scholar's learning and growth. Scholars show their family her/his work (e.g. tests, writing samples, artwork) - always accompanied by rubrics/scoring guides and sometimes accompanied by scholar reflections - and discuss what they have learned and where there is room for growth. Parents/guardians ask questions, make observations, and help scholars set goals for the next trimester or year. Student Led Conferences (SLCs) are held two times per year.